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The Freer Indian Sculptures

ERRATA

The following should read:

Page 6, line 23: ... above an altar ...

Page 29, line 26: ... the type of crown ...

Page 38, line 20: ... Sena dynasty.

Page 46, line 5: ... vigor of that piece.

Caption for Plate 10: ... Later Andhra dynasty ...



Parvati (bronze), south India or Ceylon; Chola dynasty, tenth century. Height, 101.6 cm. (40 in.).
Freer Gallery of Art, 29.84.

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
FREER GALLERY OF ART
ORIENTAL STUDIES, No. 8

THE FREER INDIAN SCULPTURES

BY

ASCHWIN LIPPE



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PREFACE

As a collector, Charles Lang Freer had an overwhelming interest in the arts of the Far East; and this is naturally reflected in the relatively small number of Indian works of art he purchased in his lifetime. In 1907 he bought an ivory carving from Orissa and some 134 miniatures of various Indian schools, mostly Mughal; and in 1914 he acquired a stone carving from Java which reflects the dominantly Hindu culture that overran Southeast Asia in medieval times. Since the opening of the Gallery in 1923 a few more sculptures have been added: four by John Ellerton Lodge, the first Director, one by his successor, Archibald Gibson Wenley, and one by the present writer.

In spite of the limited size of this group, the rarity and the exceptional quality of some of the pieces make it an outstanding collection that has attracted the favorable attention of scholars and connoisseurs in this field all over the world. It seemed desirable, therefore, to make as thorough a study as possible to determine the date and place of each in relation to the existing body of comparative material in India and the West, and to make it available to a wider audience in published form.

To undertake this task we were fortunate to secure the services of Dr. Aschwin Lippe, formerly Research Curator in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Dr. Lippe is a leading scholar in the arts of the Far East and has also specialized in the sculpture of India, has travelled widely in that country and studied the major monuments with a deep scholarly knowledge and a discriminating eye. We are very pleased to be able to publish the results of his research on our collection.

The objects in the Freer Gallery were photographed by Raymond A. Schwartz, Chief of the Freer Photographic Laboratory, and for the other illustrations appropriate acknowledgement is made in each caption. The book was edited and seen through the press by Lloyd E. Langford, Editorial Secretary, who has worked out the problems of style and layout and handled all

negotiations with the printer; and Fritz Hartmann and the Brüder Hartmann Company have given us every cooperation in producing a volume that is worthy of their reputation and of the material it treats. Finally we express our gratitude to the Kevorkian Foundation for a grant to cover the cost of publication.

JOHN ALEXANDER POPE

Freer Gallery of Art
September 1969

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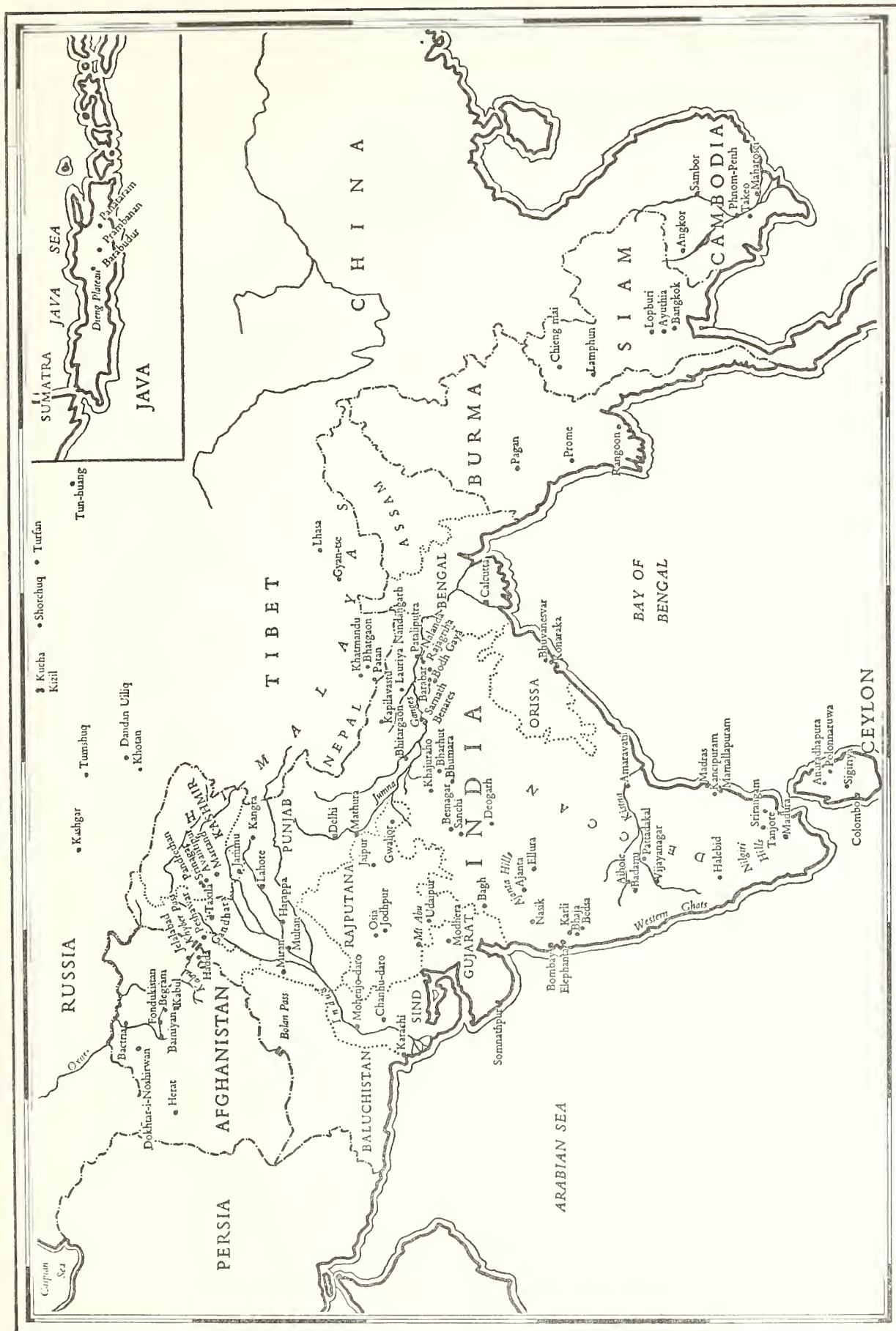
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Map of India
 Reproduced from *The Art and Architecture of India*
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INTRODUCTION

Indian sculpture is always religious sculpture, and the sculptures we find in stone were always parts of temples or other religious monuments to which they belonged both aesthetically and functionally. The temple is the complete work of art. It is both the house and the image of God, and thus the image of the universe. If we substitute "Buddha" for "God," the same goes for the Buddhist stupa. In our museum galleries we see these sculptures out of the context essential to the Indian artist and the Indian beholder.

God, although ever present in His creation, is beyond the grasp of our minds and senses. Only limited aspects of the Divine Being can be defined by human thought. These are made visible in art as utensils of worship in order to hold and direct the mind of the believer and to evoke the presence of God. In Hinduism, the innumerable aspects and manifestations of God are grouped around Siva, Vishnu (as well as, to a lesser degree, Brahma) and the Goddess.

Historically, the intricate and complicated theological edifice of Hinduism is the result of a long process. The cult of yakshas and yakshis (tree-gods and goddesses) or nagas and naginis (serpent deities of lakes and rivers) is probably as old as human civilization in south and southeast Asia. Certain trees and snakes are sacred even today, at least among the village folk. The prototypes of Siva and the Goddess, both fertility deities, were venerated as far back as the Indus valley civilization which flourished between 3000 and 1500 B.C.

The early gods of the Aryans, like those of the Greeks, were chiefly connected with the sky and were predominantly male. Indra, both war-god and bringer of rain, wielded the thunderbolt (vajra). Several gods were associated with the sun, the most prominent being Surya, who rode across the sky in a flaming chariot. Agni was the fire-god, Vayu the wind-god, Tvashtri the Vedic Vulcan and Yama the lord of the dead. Rudra, associated with the storm, was an archer-god whose arrows brought disease. Varuna was the mighty king of the universe and guardian of the cosmic order. There were many other gods, and demi-gods like the gandharvas (divine musicians) and the lovely apsaras (nymphs).

The center of the Aryan cult was sacrifice. During the late Vedic period (ca. 900–600 B.C.), the sacrifice had become the supernal mystery and the

priests who performed it (the brahmans) were, in theory, more powerful than kings and gods. In a slow but irreversible *Götterdämmerung*, many of the old Aryan gods lost their greatness or their function and identity. Others rose in popularity, notably Vishnu and Rudra-Siva.

In the process of their expansion across the north of India, along the Ganges valley, and their later infiltration of the south, the Aryans absorbed new ideas into their culture. The doctrine of transmigration (*samsara*) was developed, and that of karma, in which the deeds of one life determine the next. Asceticism, and mysticism as well, developed from ancient non-Aryan, Dravidian traditions. The materialistic-ascetic trend which in Hindu philosophy was to find its expression especially in the Sankhya and Yoga systems, gave rise to independent sects and religions, such as Jainism and Buddhism.

There was also a political element in this development. Both Mahavira (the founder of Jainism) and the Buddha belonged to the kshatriya or warrior caste which opposed the claim of the brahmans (priests) to absolute power. This is reminiscent of the manner in which the Reformation in Europe was carried by a revolt of the princes against the secular power of the church.

Buddhism was founded by the Sakya prince Siddharta (ca. 563–483 B.C.), called Gautama (his clan name) or Sakyamuni ("the silent sage of the Sakyas"). During the reign of Asoka (third century B.C.), it became the leading religion in India (see below).

At the time of the Upanishads and of the development of Jainism and Buddhism, orthodox thought was dominated by a theistic, gnostic trend. Brahman, the world spirit or cosmic essence, was identified with atman, the self or human soul.

During the last centuries before the beginning of our era, a new personal and devotional approach to God (*bhakti*), which originated in the Vasudeva cult, permeated all Indian religious thought. Buddhism, in the following centuries, added the Zoroastrian-Christian concept of the suffering saviour, which led to the development of the bodhisattva cult and the Mahayana (Great Vehicle) system.

The final form of Hinduism was largely the result of influences from the Dravidian south. A new wave of ecstatic devotional Hinduism was propagated by many wandering preachers and hymn-singers in the early medieval period. This, with the destruction of Buddhist monasteries and universities by the Muslims, led finally to the disappearance of Buddhism. Its vestiges were absorbed

into Hinduism; the Buddha became the ninth avatar (incarnation) of Vishnu who was thought to have assumed this form in order to delude the asuras (titans).

I. BARHUT STUPA RAILING

The earliest Indian sculptures in the Freer Gallery are two reliefs from the stupa of Barhut (*figs. 4 and 7*), virtually the only ones which have found their way to this country.¹ The Barhut stupa (ca. 150 B.C.), situated about 100 miles southwest of Allahabad, was the largest and most important monument erected under the Sunga dynasty (185–72 B.C.). The Sungas, who ruled over the central and eastern part of northern India, were the successors of the Maurya dynasty (ca. 321–184 B.C.), founded by Chandragupta, who is said to have been a temporary ally of Alexander the Great. Under Chandragupta's grandson, the famous Buddhist emperor Asoka, the empire reached from Afghanistan to Bengal and from Kashmir and Nepal to the Deccan.

The Barhut inscriptions confirm the patronage of the Sunga emperors and record donations of princes and merchants from all over India as well.

The large relic-mound was surrounded by a sculptured railing with a ground plan of swastika shape, measuring nearly 90 feet across. We illustrate the somewhat later stupas (nos. I and III) at Sanchi (*figs. 1 and 2*) in order to convey the general concept. The Barhut railing, interrupted by four magnificent gates, was decorated on the outside by life-size reliefs of nature spirits (yakshas, yakshis, nagas, etc.) and lotus medallions (*fig. 3*); on the coping stones and on the inner face by scenes from previous lives of the Buddha (*jatakas*) and from his last life. Between this enclosure and the stupa ran the circumambulatory passage, through which the worshippers slowly made their way.

The Barhut stupa, fallen into ruin, desecrated by treasure hunters and finally put to use as a quarry, was discovered in 1873 by Sir Alexander Cunningham who began to excavate it the following year. Most of the surviving components of the sculptured railing and gates have been reassembled in the Indian Museum in Calcutta. Nothing remains at the barren site but broken bricks from the casing of the mound.

The two reliefs in the Freer Gallery were also first seen, and published, by

¹ Except for a yakshi fragment in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, there are, to our knowledge, no others outside India.

Cunningham.² In his excellent general account of the excavation, *The Stûpa of Bharhut*, he wrote: "I have seen only two of these long rails, one of which I found in the village of Bharhut, and the other in the neighboring town of Uchahara. The latter has been ingeniously split down the middle, and the two sculptured faces are now utilized as the ornamental capitals of the pillars of a small Dharmasala erected by a Gosain."³

Examination of their backs shows that the two slabs are indeed halves of a single block; the lenticular tenons at the ends, characteristic of all the Barhut fence rails, have been chiselled off. A comparison of the Freer reliefs with Cunningham's illustrations and measurements leaves no doubt that we have here the split rail which he saw at Uchahara, about six miles from Barhut, probably not later than 1876.⁴

The reliefs were purchased for the Freer Gallery by John Ellerton Lodge in 1932 from Hagop Kevorkian, who had acquired them in England from an old India hand.

The first relief (*fig. 4*) shows a barrel-roofed building surrounded by a railing; another railing separates its two stories. Four octagonal pillars between horse-shoe arched windows or doors with hanging garlands support the roof which carries five small pinnacles. An open pillared hall forms the lower story. The two front pillars have octagonal shafts, bell capitals with diaper-patterned brackets and lotus pedestals on three-stepped plinths.

In the center of the hall under a parasol, an ornamented wheel is placed above on altar or empty seat strewn with flowers; wreaths hang from wheel hub and canopy. The Wheel of the Law (dharma-chakra) represents the teaching Buddha who, at this period, was not yet shown in human form.

On each side of the seat and wheel, a woman kneels in worship; behind her, a turbaned man stands, with joined hands, in an attitude of reverent supplication. Probably the four figures represent one couple in two stages of circumambulatory worship.

To the right, under a tree, we see the front part of a chariot drawn by two caparisoned horses. In the chariot, a king is seated, his royal umbrella held by

² See Bibliography, 25, pl. XXXI, no. 2. For later publications, cf. Bibliography, 20, pl. 13; 22, pl. 5; 23, pp. 149-162, pl. XXXV; 24, pl. 25, fig. 66; 1, v. 1, pl. 28; 42, p. 902; 16, p. 162.

³ A. Cunningham, *loc. cit.*, p. 12.

⁴ Catalogue notes, Freer Gallery.

an invisible attendant who is concealed by the charioteer. The king raises his right hand in a gesture of command.

To the left, the hindquarters of a caparisoned horse are disappearing through the gateway; the turbaned head of its rider is visible just above the gate. At the top, we see the front part of a preceding elephant, his trunk grasping the branch of a tree while the mahout urges him on with a goad.⁵

The inscription on the roof has been deciphered as “attana maramta(pi)” which means: “Even though they be dying. . . .”⁶

In the scriptures we read: “Now the kinsmen of the Fully Awakened One do not take the lives of others, even though they be dying (themselves). . . .”⁷

This provided the clue to the interpretation of the scene as the sequel of another, on a relief in the Indian Museum, which is inscribed “Raja Prasenajit of Kosala,” and “The Wheel of the Law of the Blessed One” (*fig. 5*).⁸

The latter relief shows a royal procession and the interview of King Prasenajit with the Buddha. Besides the king, we recognize the four divisions of his army, i. e., Elephant, Horse, Chariot and Foot. The procession is headed by the cavalry and war-elephants bring up the rear; between them are placed first the infantry and next the chariots. Each unit is represented twice, illustrating the progress of the procession. The two worshippers inside the hall are but one, the king himself. On the left, he is waiting upon the Buddha; on the right, retiring.

Several visits of King Prasenajit to the Buddha are recorded in the scrip-

⁵ B. Barua, 8, pp. 48 ff.: “It is curious that the same elephant going as far as the tree in the upper corner is unable to advance further. The mahout is violently piercing his head with a goad, causing excruciating pain. He grasps an outer branch with his trunk while his body shrinks down or shrivels up.” In fact, the leading elephant reaches for some leaves or fruit—as elephants will do—but is sharply called to order by the mahout. He is seen from above; his “shrivelled” body is partly concealed by the building behind which he is about to disappear. The foreground hindquarters, on the other hand, are seen from behind; they belong to a horse. For elephant tails in Barhut reliefs, see *Ancient Sculpture from India* (Cleveland 1964), figs. 32, 33.

⁶ Barua, 8.

⁷ Dhammapada-Athakata I/358; *apud* Coomaraswamy-Buhot, 24, re pl. XXV, fig. 66; cf. 23, p. 160.

⁸ Cunningham, 25, pl. XIII, scene 52; Barua, 8, p. 46; Coomaraswamy-Buhot, 24, pl. VIII, fig. 25.

tures, but only one explains all the details of the Calcutta relief.⁹ The king went to inspect Nangaraka at the Sakya border. One day he went forth in procession. From the woodland he drove to Ulumpa (or Medalumpa), the nearest Sakya town, and went to the arama where the Master was sojourning. The Buddha was in his private chamber *gandhakuti* (fragrant cell). The king was admitted; he had a troubled heart. Finally he took leave, retired and came out—only to find himself deposed.

The story ends with a reference to the fate of King Prasenajit after this last meeting with the Buddha.¹⁰ His aide Dighakarayana, who had a grudge against him, helped Prince Vidudabha (or Virudhaka) to usurp the throne of Kosala. This prince was the son of Prasenajit by the daughter of a Sakya chief and a slave woman. (According to another version,¹¹ he was the son of Prasenajit by a slave of the Sakyas.) Having been treated with contempt by the Sakyas, Vidudabha marched on Kapilavastu, proclaiming he would slay all the people.¹² (At this point follows the phrase quoted above, “Now the kinsmen of the Fully Awakened One do not take the lives of others, even though they be dying themselves,” which contains the inscribed caption.) At the border, encountering the Buddha seated under a banyan tree, the king turned back. This happened three times. The fourth time, the Buddha did not appear, knowing that he could not save the Sakyas who sinned against each other.

Thus the caption refers to the “non-violent” attitude of the Sakyas who were nearly all killed by Vidudabha; according to one version of the story,¹³ no less than 77,000.

So the scene is not, as had been thought previously, another version of King Prasenajit’s visit, but depicts the subsequent visit of Vidudabha.

The building which shelters the Buddha in the Freer Gallery relief is virtually the same as that in Prasenajit’s visit. In the scriptures, the latter building is called *gandhakuti* and situated at Ulumpa (or Medalumpa), a small village in Sakya territory (see above).¹⁴ The original *gandhakuti* is represented and

⁹ Dhammachetiya-Sutta and Anguttara-Nikaya; see Barua, 8, p. 46; 24, p. 47.

¹⁰ Barua, *loc. cit.*, quotes the Majjhima-Nikaya version.

¹¹ S. Beal, *Si-yu-ki, Buddhist Records of the Western World* (London, 1883), v. II, p. 11.

¹² Dhammapada-Athakata I/357.

¹³ W. W. Rockhill, *The Life of the Buddha* (London, 1884), p. 116.

¹⁴ Dhammapada-Athakata I/356; see Coomaraswamy-Buhot, 24.

labelled as such in another Barhut relief¹⁵ where it is a simple one-story hut. The term was applied thereafter to any residence of the Buddha and finally to the Buddhist temple. In the two reliefs illustrating a royal visit, the building is a vihara (residence) and, at the same time, an actual Buddhist temple.¹⁶ In the Vidudabha story of the scriptures, on the other hand, the Buddha sits under a tree at the border, and not in his cell. In this detail the Freer relief does not conform to the sutras.

In any case, the texts¹⁷ state that Prasenajit entered "alone" into the Buddha's abode, which corresponds with the illustration in the Calcutta relief.

The king and the charioteer in the Freer relief probably represent King Vidudabha and his general, Dighakarayana. The persons inside the hall can be interpreted as the king, the general and members of his retinue¹⁸ or, preferably, as the king and his consort, each represented twice.

The second Barhut relief¹⁹ (*fig. 7*) illustrates the worship of a stupa. The base of the inner railing is ornamented with nine right hands symbolizing the countless worshippers.²⁰ The relic mound is decorated with garlands and flowers. Its dome is surmounted by the harmika (pavilion), from which rise the umbrella and two large flowers. Wreaths hang from the canopy as well as from two other large flowers²¹ flanking the harmika railing.

One pair of worshippers, male and female, are shown to the left and to the right of the stupa, alternately kneeling and walking during circumambulation. A third worshipper, a turbaned man, can be seen behind them, circumambulating the stupa as well; he turns his back to us on the left and faces us on the right.

¹⁵ Cunningham, 25, pl. LVII.

¹⁶ Coomaraswamy, 23, p. 161, n. 1.

¹⁷ Majjhima-Nikaya and Dhammapada-Athakata; see Coomaraswamy-Buhot, 24, pp. 68–69.

¹⁸ Coomaraswamy-Buhot, 24, p. 69; 23, p. 162.

¹⁹ For publications see Bibliography, 25, pl. XXXI, no. 1; 23, pp. 149–162, pl. XXXIV; 24, pl. 25, fig. 65; 1, v. 1, pl. 28; 11, t. 5, fasc. 2, p. 131; 54, v. 11, pl. 2; 51, p. 7; 8; 9; 19, pl. 21.

²⁰ Cf. the quotation from the Digha-Nikaya (below): "And there will come to such a place..." Coomaraswamy, 23, p. 158, n. 2, quotes J. Ph. Vogel: "The five-finger marks shown here and elsewhere at the base of the stupa or on the altar are not representations of the real handmarks of worshippers but representations of ornaments which are themselves imitative of the handmarks applied by actual worshippers, perhaps as a kind of signature."

²¹ Interpreted by Barua, 8, p. 54, as Wheels of the Law.

The stupa is flanked by two pairs of flowering sal trees. Above, to the right, a kinnara (half-human, half-bird)²² swoops down offering a garland. To the left flies a deva (god), holding a basket from which he scatters flowers.

The stupa is a relic mound, a funerary monument. It symbolizes the deceased Buddha, who, as we have seen before, was not yet represented in human form; it also symbolizes the entire universe.

In the relevant scripture,²³ the Buddha is being questioned, before his departure from the world, by his favorite pupil Ananda who wants to know what ceremonies are to be performed after his demise. The Enlightened One replies:

“The body of the tathagata (who came in truth; epithet of the Buddha) will be treated as one treats the body of a chakravartin (world ruler); (i. e. it will be wrapped in a shroud and cremated on a pyre; then) a stupa will be raised to the tathagata at the crossing of the roads.²⁴ Whoever shall there place garlands, or perfume, or color,²⁵ or shall perform a salutation,²⁶ or clarify his spirit, to him (these deeds) will bring lasting good and happiness. This place, where the believer can say: ‘Here the tathagata was completely extinguished, to that point of extinction which is without any residue of birth,’ is for that warrior who has faith a beautiful and deeply moving place . . . And there will come to such a place brethren and sisters and lay disciples who have faith;²⁷ and those who die with a clarified spirit during their pilgrimage to this sanctuary will, once they are cut off from their body, and deceased, be born again in the welcome²⁸ celestial world.”

²² According to Coomaraswamy-Buhot, 24, a supanna; cf. 23, p. 149.

²³ Digha-Nikaya XVI, Maha-Parinibbana-Suttanta 5. 10–12; H. Kern, *Manual of Indian Buddhism*, v. III, fasc. 8, pp. 43 ff.; T. W. Rhys Davids, *Dialogues of the Buddha*, v. III, pp. 154–156; cf. H. Zimmer, 69, p. 133. We generally follow the French translation of Coomaraswamy-Buhot, 24, p. 68, who quote the Digha-Nikaya II/161 and 141.

²⁴ The crossing of the four directions corresponds to the center of the universe; cf. Coomaraswamy, 23.

²⁵ The color probably refers, according to Coomaraswamy, to the five-finger marks; see note 20, above.

²⁶ Including circumambulation; cf. Coomaraswamy, 23.

²⁷ Cf. notes 20 and 25.

²⁸ Coomaraswamy translates literally: “Well-gone” or “well-fared.”

The scene on our relief is none other than the parinirvana, the Extinction of the Enlightened One, between the twin sal trees in the sal grove of the Mallas at Kusinagara; the Freer relief is one of several Barhut panels representing this scene.²⁹ We also find it at Sanchi (*fig. 6*) where the deep undercutting, the delicate carving, the intricate composition show a clear advance on Barhut. We are reminded that at least one of the Sanchi gates was donated by the guild of ivory carvers. The worshippers and musicians wear Indo-Scythian tunics and belts, capes, boots or leggings, skull caps or Iranian peaked hats. Among the outlandish instruments we notice central Asian dragon trumpets and the Greek aulos (double clarinet); the horizontal drum is Indian (*mridanga*). A more realistic and narrative illustration can be seen on the Gandhara relief (*fig. 16*); it will be discussed below.

Just as the Barhut railing still shows the carpentry technique of a wood construction, so the style of the reliefs relates to carving in wood. The relief is not very high and hardly goes beyond the exploitation of a flat surface. The larger figures are somewhat stiff, the smaller ones often clumsy, the perspective inconsistent, fragmented and naive. Despite all this, the Barhut reliefs are a sheer delight; full of life and of love for all living nature, unsophisticated but based on keen observation permeated by a touching faith, they marvelously illustrate the charming tales of the Buddha's last and previous lives as they were told by the monks.

²⁹ Coomaraswamy-Buhot, 24, pl. VIII, fig. 24; pl. XXIV, fig. 64.

II. GANDHARA FRIEZE

In order to understand the existence of a Western school of art in north-west India (now Pakistan and Afghanistan) we have to make an excursion into history after Alexander the Great.³⁰ By about the middle of the third century B.C. the Seleucid empire of western Asia had begun to disintegrate, and Parthia (northern Iran) and Bactria (the Oxus river area) were gradually emerging as independent states. Demetrius the ruler of Bactria, where Greeks had already settled under the Achaemenids, invaded the Ganges valley and helped to bring an end to the Maurya empire. The Punjab and the area of the recent Northwest Frontier Province came under the domination of the Indo-Greeks, descendants of Alexander's captains, whose beautiful coins we still admire. One of the Greek kings of the Punjab was Milinda (Menander), patron of the philosopher-monk Nagashena, whose long discussions with the sage are recorded in a well-known Pali text, *Questions of Milinda*.

The Greco-Bactrian kingdoms, however, did not survive long. Bactria was occupied by the Parthians early in the latter half of the second century B.C., and the Greeks were confined to their possessions in India and Afghanistan.

In the middle of the second century B.C. a great tribal movement began in central Asia, set off by the Chinese campaigns against the Hsiung-nu. First the Sakas (Scythians), then the Yüeh-chih (Tochari, a Scythian tribe from Kansu in northwest China) invaded Bactria. The Parthian rule in Bactria was replaced by the Sakas who, in their turn, were forced out by Yüeh-chih pressure and attacked first the Parthian princes of Iran and then the Greeks in India. The city of Taxila, east of the upper Indus, was taken by the Sakas at the close of the first century B. C., thus ending Greek domination here as well. For a short time, northwest India was ruled by a line of kings with Iranian names (the Pahlavas); one of them, Gondophares, is said to have been the host of St. Thomas.

³⁰ For the following paragraphs, see Basham, 10, Rosenfield, 49, as well as: B. Rowland, 51, and *Gandhara Sculpture from Pakistan* (New York, 1960); D. Seckel, *Kunst des Buddhismus* (Baden-Baden, 1962); H. Goetz, *The Art of India* (New York, 1959); A. Foucher, *L'Art Greco-Bouddhique du Gandhara* (Paris, 1905-18), and *La Vie du Bouddha* (Paris, 1949); H. Hargreaves, *The Buddha Story in Stone* (Calcutta, 1914); H. Ingolt, *Gandharan Art in Pakistan* (New York, 1957).

By the middle of the first century A.D., the Kushans, the most powerful tribe of the Yüeh-chih, came over the mountains from Bactria and established their rule in the Kabul valley, until then still governed by Greek kings, and in northwest India. In quick succession they conquered Gandhara (Kandahar), Kashmir, the Punjab, Sind and the Ganges valley as far as Benares. The decapitated statue of their great King Kanishka I, in kaftan and felt boots, holding sword and mace, can still be admired in Mathura, one of his capitals. The Kushan kingdom was finally overrun by the Parthians (Sassanians) under Shapur I, between A.D. 200 and 250, but religious and artistic activities in this area did not come to an end until about A.D. 500 with the devastating invasion of the Hephthalites or White Huns (Huna), another central Asian horde, who destroyed the monasteries and butchered the population.

Being foreigners, the Kushan rulers could not easily be accepted into the Hindu faith; consequently, they adopted and patronized Buddhism. All the arts flourished in their domain. Famous philosophers and poets from all over India came to stay at their court, and the great stupa which Kanishka built at Peshawar was admired as one of the wonders of the world by Chinese pilgrims visiting the holy land of Buddhism.

The Kushan rulers had close diplomatic and commercial relations with the Roman world. Beginning with Augustus (27 B.C.–A.D. 14) the emperors received Kushan embassies; these exchanges continued through the reigns of Trajan (90–117) and Hadrian (117–138), and into the Antonine period (138–180).

Gandhara art is not in any way a continuation of the indigenous Indian tradition illustrated by the Barhut reliefs. Due to the historical background, the geographical situation, and the friendly relations of the Kushan kings with the West it is nearly entirely Western, closely related to the provincial Roman art of Palmyra, Antioch and Seleucia. Almost certainly a number of foreign artists and artisans were imported from these regions and trained the native craftsmen in the Roman style. At the same time, the subject matter of Gandhara art was Indian, predominantly Buddhist, though many secondary motifs are of west Asiatic or Hellenistic origin.

In earlier Indian art, the Buddha had been represented by a symbol—the imprint of his feet, the bo-tree (*fig. 2*) or, as on the two Barhut reliefs, the Wheel of the Law and the stupa. Now a new devotional approach to religion (*bhakti*), stimulated by the development of the Vasudeva-Krishna cult in Hin-

duism, led to reproduction of the human image of the Buddha, one form being that of Prince Siddharta. This human image was, in Gandhara, fashioned after the Greco-Roman Apollo and the statues of Roman emperors. Among the first portrayals of the Buddha in human form is a likeness on a gold coin of King Kanishka (second century A.D.).³¹ While the foreign type of Buddhist icon was being created in Gandhara, the workshops of Mathura, the southern capital of the Kushans, were producing an Indian Buddha image in the tradition of the yaksha and Jina statues of the Maurya and Sunga periods.

In the gradual development of Mahayana Buddhism, the image of the Buddha changed from human sage and teacher to transcendent spiritual being. The same evolution emphasized and broadened the concept of the bodhisattva, from a previous incarnation of the Buddha to a divine being who denies himself the attainment of Buddhahood and nirvana until, with his help, all creatures have been saved. One aspect of the cult of the bodhisattva apparently corresponded (as later in China under the Toba-Wei) with the veneration of the ruler as his manifestation, an idea probably derived from the Roman emperor cult.

— The splendid relief in the Freer Gallery³² (*figs. 8, 11, 14 and 16*), one of the finest examples of Gandhara art in this country, illustrates the four cardinal events of the Buddha's life: Birth, Enlightenment, First Sermon and Death.

The first scene (*fig. 8*) shows the miraculous birth of Prince Siddharta in the grove of sal trees called Lumbini, near the Sakya capital Kapilavastu, where his mother stopped on the way to her parents' home for her confinement. Queen Mahamaya is standing in the center holding onto a branch, while her sister Mahaprajapati supports her; we note the short tunic and the trouser-like dhoti. Like all heroic births, this one is miraculous: the child emerges from the mother's side. As we are told by the scriptures, he at once stood upright, took seven strides and announced that this was his last birth (*fig. 9*). In the Freer relief, the child Siddharta is shown with a halo, symbol of divinity (orig-

³¹ The year of Kanishka's accession is much discussed; various scholars put it at dates which range from 58 B. C. to A. D. 288. Until recently, opinions of most competent authorities were divided between A. D. 78 and 144 (Basham, 10, pp. 253 ff.; Rowland, *Gandhara* . . ., p. 6). Rosenfield, 49, arrives at a date of A. D. 110–115. We are inclined to follow Rosenfield, who also summarizes and discusses the other theories.

³² For publications, see, 14, p. 242; 17, p. 35; 16, p. 172; 30, p. 132; 49, pls. 81, 82, pp. 241 ff.; 53, pl. 11; 54, pl. 85; 61, p. 224, pl. XVB.

inally the Iranian sun disc), and the ushnisha (a cranial protuberance concealed under the topknot). The latter is among the magic marks that distinguish him from ordinary mortals and reveal his supernatural character; it is thought to accommodate the cosmic consciousness or supreme wisdom which Siddharta Gautama acquired only when he became the Buddha, i. e., the Fully Awakened or Enlightened One (see the next panel, *fig. 11*).

In this relief, two women are standing next to the queen's sister. The first holds a mirror; her right hand is raised in a gesture of rejoicing. The other carries a box with ointments and a fan of peacock feathers.³³ The elaborate coiffures of all four women are adorned with flowers; they wear earrings, necklaces, wristlets and anklets. The anklets of the queen and her sister are double and adorned with a cabochon; the queen alone wears an additional long, jewelled necklace which falls over her right breast. To the left, the child Buddha is received on a scarf by Sakra (Indra), the king of heaven—recognizable by his flat (Iranian?) crown and the third eye; he wears a heavy jewelled necklace which falls over his arm like a sacred cord. The youthful god with bare torso and the topknot of a brahman, standing behind Indra, in an attitude of pious adoration, is Brahma.³⁴ A third deva, in awe, touches his lower lip with the left hand while the right jubilantly waves his upper garment in the air. Two more adoring denizens of the heavenly world are shown above; they may have held musical instruments.³⁵

For comparison, we show an Amaravati relief illustrating this scene (*fig. 10*), in which the child Buddha is not represented. The scarf held by the gods is empty; so is the footstool next to Queen Maya. The languorous attenuated beauty of the figures, the music of softly moving contours make the Amaravati reliefs, in the words of Coomaraswamy, "the most voluptuous and the most delicate flower of Indian sculpture."

The second scene (*fig. 11*) shows Gautama attaining Buddhahood, i. e. Enlightenment, despite the attacks and temptations of the Buddhist devil Mara, the spirit of the world. After years spent as a wandering ascetic, in meditation, fasts and penances, he sat down under a pipal tree (*Ficus religiosa*)

³³ In another representation of this scene, the woman holds a palm branch and a waterpot, indispensable where consecrated water is needed; cf. Ingholt, *loc. cit.*, no. 13.

³⁴ Cf. Foucher, *loc. cit.*, I/563.

³⁵ Cf. Ingholt, *loc. cit.*, nos. 13, 14.

outside of Gaya, in Magadha. He made a solemn vow that he would not leave his seat until the riddle of human suffering was solved.

For 49 days he sat beneath the tree. Mara tempted him with false news about his father's kingdom; he called his host of demons and attacked him with whirlwind, tempest, flood and earthquake; he called his daughters Desire, Pleasure and Passion, who danced and sang, trying to seduce him; in vain, the Universal Empire was offered him. When Mara asked Gautama to show evidence of his goodness and benevolence, the latter touched the ground with his hand, and the Earth herself spoke with a voice of thunder: "I am his witness." The devil gave up his struggle, and at the dawning of the 49th day, Gautama knew the ultimate truth. He had found the secret of suffering and understood what man must do to overcome it. He was "fully awakened" or enlightened—a Buddha.³⁶

In our relief, we see, at the Buddha's right, a princely warrior who shields his eyes from the blinding sight with one hand while his sword arm is restrained by a young noble wearing a topknot. In the equivalent group at the Buddha's left, the prince is drawing his sword while a noble youth pulls him back by his left arm. Despite some differences in their turbans, garments and swords, the two princes probably both represent Mara, and each of the two youths his son who tried to restrain the father. A progression in time may be implied by the different gestures.

To the far right, a bare-headed warrior in scale armour carries trident, shield and sword. The straight hilts of the swords, the sword belts, and the manner in which the latter pass through a loop halfway down the scabbards, all are typically Iranian features.³⁷

Above, Mara's host of demons attack from both sides, brandishing various kinds of weapons and sounding bell, conch and drum; one of them appears to hold a serpent. An Indo-Scythian riding a camel, a rearing elephant, a monkey riding a horse and a large dog have joined the fray. Some demons have animal heads: boar, ram and monkey. One has a pronounced goitre; on his back, he carries the barrel drum which is being beaten by a helmeted figure.³⁸

³⁶ After Basham, 10, pp. 258 ff.

³⁷ Cf. Ingholt, nos. 63–66.

³⁸ B. S. Blumberg, 14, diagnoses the goitre and quotes evidence that it is hyper-endemic in the area. It is often associated with deafness. For Mara's host, cf. Viennot, 61, p. 224.

A third helper of the Buddha is visible above the dog's head: the bodhisattva Vajrapani, foe of sin and evil, and double of Indra who, like the latter, carries a thunderbolt (vajra).

Gautama is shown with the attributes of Buddhahood: halo, ushnisha and urna—a luminous mark (originally a tuft of hair) on the forehead. He is seated in yoga-posture under the pipal, also called bo-tree or Tree of Wisdom (bodhi), on a seat covered with grass and leaves. The left hand holds the end of his mantle while the right points downward, calling the earth to witness (bhumisparsa-mudra). In front of his seat, two armoured warriors with sword and battle-axe helplessly tumble to the ground.

In the lower left corner of the relief, a third princely figure sits in meditation under a sal tree, on a wicker stool. His back is turned towards the main scene. His right hand touches his forehead; one leg is raised above the footstool. The motif is the one we know as the "Contemplative Prince" in Chinese sculpture; it became very popular in early Korean and Japanese art as well. The insertion of the meditating Siddharta, still wearing his princely garments and jewels, in a relief illustrating the attack of Mara and the Enlightenment is an anachronism. Artistically a counterpoint to the dramatic main scene, this detail has a deep religious significance.

According to the relevant scripture³⁹ Mara, in the midst of his assault, is told by an invisible being that Sakyamuni is like a great physician, pitying the world in its distress, diseases and passions. His one desire is to free mankind from the snares of delusion. So great are his psychic power and his compassion that he has become invincible.

Sakyamuni is here conceived as a powerful agent of mercy who will use his enlightenment for the benefit of mankind. This concept corresponds with that of the unspecified bodhisattva called Mahasattva whose qualities are described in a text⁴⁰ translated into Chinese in A.D. 284. The emphasis is on compassion, mercy and salvation; divine mercy is embodied as a superior being, the bodhisattva par excellence.

³⁹ We follow John M. Rosenfield, 49, pp. 241 ff., who quotes Asvagosha's *Buddhacharita* (ch. XIII) and the hymns of Matricheta.

⁴⁰ The appendix to the *Yogacharabhumisastra*, added when translated in A.D. 284 by the Yüeh-chih monk Dharmaraksha at Tun-huang; cf. Rosenfield, *loc. cit.*, p. 242; J. Démiéville in *Bulletin de l'Ecole Française d'Extrême Orient*, XLIV (1954), pp. 339 ff.

We can perhaps recognize the same motif in the gently smiling seated prince in an Amaravati relief illustrating the Assault of Mara.⁴¹ In later representations of this scene at Ajanta Cave XXVI (*fig. 12*) and on the Barabudur,⁴² the seated prince has been transformed into Mara who is being consoled by his daughters. We believe that this motif of the dejected Mara is derived from that of the compassionate bodhisattva when the latter was not properly understood any more. We still recognize the sal tree beneath which the bodhisattva was meditating. The Prince of This World is sitting on a low stool under an umbrella, symbol of authority; his right hand supports the inclined head. The expression of compassionate sorrow has imperceptibly changed to one of distress at his failure. Mara's three lovely daughters who, further to the left, are tempting the Buddha with song and dance, have come to sit at their father's feet, trying to console him. The inserted "ideograph" of the compassionate bodhisattva who, in relative time, precedes the enlightened Buddha, has become a final adagio on which the drama of the climactic temptation scene ebbs out.

The holy site at Gaya (now Bodhgaya), where Sakyamuni's Enlightenment took place, was later enclosed by a railing; parts of it from the Sunga dynasty still exist. The great temple, replacing a structure erected by Asoka, was admired by the Chinese pilgrim Hsüan-tsang as early as A. D. 635; its tower rises to nearly 200 feet (*fig. 13*). The temple has been much restored over the centuries. An altar-like platform next to it, in the shadow of an old pipal tree, is said to be the Buddha's seat; the tree is believed to be the original Tree of Wisdom, or at least its direct descendant.

From Gaya, the Buddha journeyed to the Deer Park near Varanasi (Benares), the site of the modern Sarnath, where he joined the five hermits who had shared his previous penances. To these five ascetics, the Buddha preached his first sermon, the "Sermon of the Turning of the Wheel of the Law." This contains the "Four Noble Truths" and the "Noble Eightfold Path" which are accepted as basic dogma by all Buddhist sects. He defined the Noble Truths as: Sorrow (birth, age, disease, death, etc.); the Causes of Sorrow

⁴¹ Zimmer, 68, pl. 88 (Musée Guimet); from Ghantasala, Amaravati school, second century.

⁴² R. S. Gupte and B. D. Mahajan, *Ajanta, Ellora and Aurangabad Caves* (Bombay, 1962), pl. XLIX; D. Mitra, *Ajanta* (Guide) (New Delhi, 1958), p. 63; H. J. Krom, *The Life of Buddha* (The Hague, 1926), fig. 95, p. 106.

(desire leads to rebirth which brings passion, etc.); the Suppression of Sorrow (the complete suppression of that desire so that no passion remains, etc.); and the Way to the Suppression of Sorrow (i.e. the Noble Eightfold Path). The latter consists of Right Views, Right Resolve, Right Speech, Right Conduct, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Recollection and Right Meditation.

The five ascetics were convinced by the new doctrine, gave up their austerities and once more became the Buddha's disciples. On this holy site monasteries, shrines and stupas were erected; one of the latter still stands.

In the Freer relief (*fig. 14*) the Buddha is seated on a dais covered with grass and leaves beneath a tree from which two garlands are hanging. His left hand once more holds the end of his mantle; the right is raised in a gesture of assurance, granting the absence of fear (*abhaya-mudra*). Generally in this scene—and especially at a more developed stage of Buddhist iconography—the Buddha is shown in the attitude of teaching, of turning the Wheel of the Law (*dharmachakra-mudra*).⁴³

In front of the Buddha's seat, we see the Wheel of the Law, indicating the First Sermon; it is flanked by two reclining deer (antelope and ibex), which symbolize the Deer Park. This configuration became a standard element of the First Sermon motif. We recognize it in Ellora Cave XII (*fig. 15*) where Gautama as well as the neighbouring Seven Buddhas of the Past are in the attitude of teaching.

At the right of the Freer relief, on two lower seats, two monks with shaved heads are seated, listening intently; a third is standing on the left. The monks represent the five ascetics mentioned above; the two missing ones may have been lost with a part of the relief. Two standing worshippers flank the throne: on the left, a youthful brahman seems to receive a blessing; on the right, a typical Kushan in short tunic and trousers, with thick moustache and short curly hair, probably is an honored donor. Six devas, turbaned and jewelled, are shown in the background on the right; one of them is offering flowers. More gods or demi-gods may have been carved on the other side of the Buddha. The bearded figure holding a thunderbolt (*vajra*) behind the Buddha's left shoulder is once more his guardian Vajrapani.⁴⁴

⁴³ For Gandhara reliefs of the Buddha in *dharmachakra-mudra*, see Seckel, *loc. cit.*, p. 159, Ingholt, *loc. cit.*, figs. 245–261; Rosenfield, 49, fig. 166.

⁴⁴ Cf. Ingholt, *loc. cit.*, nos. 75–77.

More than 40 years later, at the age of 80, the Buddha spent the rainy season near the city of Vaisali. After the rains he journeyed with his followers northwards to the hill country which had been the home of his youth. On the way he prepared the disciples for his death.

At the town of Pava he was entertained by a lay disciple, Chunda the smith, and ate a meal of pork. Soon after this he was attacked by dysentery, but he insisted on moving on to the nearby town of Kusinagara. Here on the outskirts of the town, he lay down under a sal tree, and that night he died. His last words were: "All composite things decay. Strive diligently!" This was his Final Extinction (parinirvana). The sorrowing disciples cremated his body, and his ashes were divided between the representatives of various tribal peoples and the king of Magadha.⁴⁵

We remember the Barhut and Sanchi reliefs (*figs. 6 and 7*) which illustrate this event in the guise of the adoration of a stupa. In the Gandhara fragment at the Freer Gallery (*fig. 16*), the Buddha is lying on a splendid bed with mattress, blanket and pillows; his head rests on the right hand. The monk with a staff, standing at the far left, is Maha-Kasyapa, one of the principal disciples. On the road he had met a naked ascetic of the Ajivika sect who told him of the Buddha's death. Next to Kasyapa, we see the naked ascetic; in his left hand he holds a cloth, in the right, one of the heavenly mandarava flowers which the gods had showered on the death-bed.⁴⁶ In front of the Buddha's couch, a hooded monk sits in meditation, next to a tripod of three sticks supporting a water container. He is Subhadra, the last convert made by the Buddha. Behind the naked ascetic, the Buddha's guardian Vajrapani with his thunderbolt touches his head in an expression of grief. At the right, the Malla nobles of Kusinagara, with moustaches, turbans and jewels, are raising their hands to their heads and above in gestures of sorrow and despair. Above, a noble or deva is offering flowers; at the left, a tree spirit salutes the Buddha from a sal tree.⁴⁷

In a later representation of this scene in Ajanta Cave XXVI (*fig. 17*) the reclining Buddha has, in the "perspective of importance," grown to colossal proportions; beneath him, we recognize the mourning disciples and nobles, their heads resting on their hands.

⁴⁵ After Basham, 10.

⁴⁶ Cf. Foucher, *loc. cit.*, I/568.

⁴⁷ Ingholt, *loc. cit.*, nos. 137-142.

The iconography of the Freer Gallery reliefs as well as their style—the schematic ridges and grooves of the drapery folds—point to a date not before the late second or early third century. Differences in detail among the panels, in the treatment of the Buddha's hair and expression as well as in the folds of his mantle, or in the likenesses of Indra and Vajrapani, are probably due to different sculptors' hands and to different pattern books.

Like nearly all Gandhara stone sculpture, the Freer relief is carved from a bluish slate known as chalicose schist. Originally, the stone sculptures were painted and gilded. They were designed to be placed as facing on stupas or monastic buildings. The present relief is said to have been excavated at or near Darjeelin(?) in the Peshawar area, where it was acquired by the brother of Hagop Kevorkian.

III. DURGA FROM JAVA

At least since the beginning of the Christian Era, merchants and adventurers, priests and monks mainly from the south and east of India had begun to establish themselves overseas, in Further India (southeast Asia) as a new ruling class which introduced Hinduism, and later Buddhism, and Indianized at least the upper strata of the local population. This cultural and economic expansion profoundly changed the face of southeast Asia.

The oldest kingdoms thus created were Champa (southeast Vietnam) and Funan (south Vietnam and south Cambodia), while the first settlements probably were those on the isthmus of the Malay Peninsula. The ascendancy of Chenla (to the north of Funan) about A. D. 550 marks the beginning of the great Khmer empire, which later moved its center further north into the region of Angkor; from at least the sixth century the kingdom of Dvaravati flourished in the Mon country (Menam valley, central Thailand).

The first large Indonesian kingdom, Srivijaya, came into being in Sumatra towards the end of the seventh century. The most powerful dynasties arose in Java from the eighth century on. The art which flourished on these islands came to be known as "Indo-Javanese."⁴⁸

Central Java was ruled first by a Saiva dynasty (ca. 700–750), then by the Buddhist Sailendras (ca. 750–850) who soon extended their sphere of influence even beyond Java. In the middle of the ninth century they established themselves in the kingdom of Srivijaya on Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula. Around 860, they lost Central Java to a Hindu dynasty from East Java which founded the kingdom of Mataram, and retreated to Sumatra. Eventually, the princes of Mataram withdrew again to the east. After 929, the capital was moved from Central Java to East Java which, during the following centuries, was the hub of all political and artistic activity.⁴⁹

In India, the Goddess was prominent in the oldest layer of religion, as evidenced by countless terra-cotta figurines from the period of the Indus valley civilization onwards. She was somewhat eclipsed in the pantheon of

⁴⁸ Also called "Hindu-Javanese."

⁴⁹ The historical resumé is based upon Bernet Kempers, 12, and Wagner, 66.

the Aryan invaders, but reasserted herself all the more strongly during the Vedic period. She infiltrated Buddhism and Jainism. In Hinduism, she manifested herself in many forms: as mother and as virgin, as goddess of fertility and of the earth, as consort of the gods, as helper and as scourge. The Hindu renaissance gave additional powerful impetus to the many cults focused on one or another of the Goddess' aspects. Today, she is again the most popular divinity.

The concept of the goddess Durga slaying the Buffalo-Titan (Durga Mahishasuramardini) had particular appeal. In art, it was realized in some of the most powerful and dramatic compositions we know. In the legend underlying this concept the titan, evil incarnate, had become so mighty that the gods were helpless against his arrogance. One by one they handed over their weapons, symbol and essence of their power and virtue, to the goddess, who challenged and defeated the demon in bloody combat. In one version, the demon re-emerged in human form from the severed neck of the buffalo only in order to be finally destroyed; in another version, countless small demons rose from every single drop of the blood that gushed forth but were killed by the weapons wielded by her many arms.⁵⁰

In most of the early representations of the combat, Durga, in the "perspective of importance" much bigger than her enemy, holds the Buffalo-Titan by the tail or snout, tramples him down with one foot and pierces his body with Siva's trident spear. The earliest reliefs of this type can be seen at Udayagiri (early fifth century);⁵¹ a terra-cotta image found in Rajasthan may be even earlier.⁵² There are other stone reliefs, from the seventh century, at Elephanta, Ellora Cave XXI and Badami Cave I. We illustrate an early example from Alampur (*fig. 18*) which is strongly influenced by the powerful Badami relief.

Towards the end of the seventh (Mamallapuram) and in the eighth century (Pattadakal, Alampur, Mukhalingam, Ellora Kailasanatha), the demon begins to have a human body, generally with a buffalo head.

In the eighth century (Alampur) for the first time we encounter the de-

⁵⁰ Cf. H. Zimmer, *Myth and Symbol*, pp. 99 ff.; Rao, 47, pt. I, v. II, pp. 338 ff.; Banerjea, 4, pp. 497 ff.

⁵¹ Banerjea, 4, pl. XLI/4.

⁵² R. C. Agrawala in *Lalit-Kala*, vols. 1-2, p. 72, dates it to 100 B. C.-A. D. 100, which seems too early.

mon emerging, in human form, from the severed neck of the buffalo; generally at least one leg is still inside the animal (*fig. 19*). During the following centuries, this type became popular in Orissa and Bihar-Bengal. In most of the images from eastern India the goddess has eight or ten arms.⁵³

In the south of India, under the Pallava and Chola dynasties, another icon was worshipped. Here, the goddess stands on the severed head of the buffalo (*pars pro toto*) in an apotheosis of victory.⁵⁴ A relief of the Trimurti Cave Temple at Mamallapuram (*fig. 20*) shows her in this position. Her beauty reminds us of Amaravati (*fig. 10*), fountainhead of south Indian sculpture.

In one version of the scriptures the goddess rides her lion mount into battle, as shown on a famous Mamallapuram relief, but finally descends in order to jump on the buffalo's head and trample it to death "with her tender feet."⁵⁵

In another popular configuration, she is flanked by devotees who seem about to cut off their hands or heads in order to lay them at her feet. Such offerings actually took place although, sometimes, the devotees were only drawing blood with their swords as a symbolic sacrifice.⁵⁶ This form of Durga has been identified as Korravai, the victory goddess of a tribe of cattle thieves, highwaymen and professional soldiers.⁵⁷ The earliest images of this type date from the late seventh century (Singavaram, Mamallapuram).

The earliest Hindu images found in Indonesia and elsewhere in Further India were stimulated by Pallava icons from south India. There is, however, in Indonesia, no extant image of Durga standing on the buffalo head.

In the Freer relief (*fig. 21*), Durga is four-armed. Her back (upper) hands hold the disc (*chakra*) on the right and the conch (*sankha*) on the left. The lower (front) right holds a rope firmly tied to the buffalo's tail; the lower left grasps the demon's hair or just leans on his head. Wearing halo, crown, jewels

⁵³ Cf. Banerjea, 4, Kramrisch, 35, Banerji, 5.

⁵⁴ The colossal image from Besnagar (Vidisa) in central India is a rare northern example.

⁵⁵ Varaha-Purana and Markandeya-Purana; cf. Rao, 47.

⁵⁶ Cf. K. R. Srinivasan, "Some Aspects of Religion as Revealed by Early Monuments and Literature of the South," *Journal of the Madras University*, v. XXXII, no. 1, July, 1960; cf. also J. Filliozat in *Arts Asiatiques*, XV, 1967, pp. 65 ff.

⁵⁷ Harle, 29; cf. also Vogel, 62 and Filliozat, *loc. cit.*

and a lower garment (*lunggi*), the goddess stands with both feet on the buffalo. We note the small breasts and the slightly protruding belly. The buffalo, peacefully reclining, gives the impression of being her vehicle; it is not decapitated. From the wound in its neck emerges the demon, his right leg still inside the animal's body; he carries a dagger or hunting knife. There is no evidence of combat.

The image has neither the power nor the beauty of the Indian examples. However, despite its somewhat provincial character, a naive charm animates the little figure, and an echo of the magic power embodied in the Goddess still clings to it.

Several surveys and analyses of the numerous Durga Mahishasuramardini images found in Java were made at the beginning of this century.⁵⁸ In most cases the goddess has eight arms, but there are variants in the number of arms as well as in the choice and position of weapons. The principal weapon especially of the rare four-armed images is the disc (*chakra*). Eight out of the eighty-eight Durgas in the Jakarta collection have four arms; seven of these eight come from East Java. The goddess generally stands on the reclining buffalo. The demon either emerges from the buffalo's head, one or both legs often still inside, or else he either sits or stands on or behind it. When armed, he carries a short sword or hunting knife and sometimes a shield. Often he is unarmed, or even assumes an attitude of worship.

All Durga images from East Java which had been discovered by the time of these early studies show the demon completely emerged and separated from the buffalo's body. This led to the conclusion that the emerging asura represents the older tradition current in the Central Javanese period.⁵⁹

A cursory survey of publications and photographs available now does not seem to confirm the absolute geographical restriction of this variant to East Java; it does, however, generally confirm the conclusion.

The many variations in the number of arms, choice and position of weapons, etc., indicate a considerable freedom from the scriptural canons. This freedom is even more evident in the main difference from the Indian icons: the buffalo is not struggling nor decapitated but reclines peacefully; the demon, often unarmed, is either completely subdued and submissive or even

⁵⁸ Knebel, 32, 33, 34.

⁵⁹ Knebel, 34.

takes an attitude of devotion and worship. The signs of the bloody combat have largely or completely disappeared.

The position of the animal has been interpreted as evidence for an older Indian tradition in which the buffalo would have been Durga's vehicle.⁶⁰ It has also been explained, more convincingly, as the result of a weakened tradition,⁶¹ an explanation that also goes for the "East Javanese" position of the demon who, in Indian icons as well as in the relevant scriptures, sprouts from the animal's severed neck.⁶²

It is not impossible, however, that the "vehicle position" of the buffalo was based on a misunderstanding of the Pallava type of icon described above. The worshipping attitude of the demon might be an echo of the warrior devotees flanking the goddess Korravai.

When we compare the Freer relief with Durga and other sculptures from various temples of Java, we find that it is hard to place. Crown, jewels and other details are not too far from Lara Jonggrang (Prambanam),⁶³ but the sculptures of the latter temple are more finished, more elaborate and more graceful. Lara Jonggrang now is dated to the middle or the second half of the ninth century. A Durga from Prambanam⁶⁴ looks more elegant and seems to be later than the Freer image; the demon, incidentally, stands on or behind the buffalo's head, in the "East Javanese" fashion. An eight-armed image from Bagelen (Dieng)⁶⁵ is stylistically somewhat closer to our Durga; we note the slightly protruding belly. Here again, the demon has completely emerged and sits behind the buffalo in an attitude of worship. In a Durga relief from Nusukan near Surakarta⁶⁶ (*fig. 22*), the hair of the demon has the same shape as on the Freer icon, resembling a Basque beret. Here as well, the goddess holds a rope tied to the buffalo's tail. The elongated tail, incidentally, which is frequent in Javanese images,⁶⁷ seems to occur in India for the first time at Mukhalingam (Orissa), in the second half of the eighth century.⁶⁸

⁶⁰ Bosch, 15.

⁶¹ J. J. Boeles, in *Cultureel Indie*, v. IV, 1942, *apud* Bosch, 15.

⁶² Bhattasali, 13, pls. LXV, LXVI.

⁶³ Cf. With, 67, Bernet Kempers, 12.

⁶⁴ Photograph, Musée Guimet, 2318127/4.

⁶⁵ Photograph, Musée Guimet, 231312/25.

⁶⁶ Photograph, Musée Guimet, 23189/4.

⁶⁷ Compare the Leiden bronze; A. K. Coomaraswamy, *The Arts and Crafts of India and Ceylon* (New York, 1964), pl. 34a.

⁶⁸ Barrett, 6, pl. 10.

The Durga image from Chandi Badut⁶⁹ in East Java (*fig. 23*) has a less protruding belly but is closer in style to the Freer icon than the others mentioned above. The position of the demon cannot be determined. Badut is considered by some scholars to be one of the oldest temples in East Java.⁷⁰ In some ways, our image seems to herald the much later sculptures of Chandi Jago (ca. 1270–1280) and Singasari (ca. 1300)⁷¹ in East Java.

We can assign the Freer Durga to the first half or the middle of the ninth century, i. e., to the Central Javanese period. We believe, however, that the provenance is East Java.⁷²

⁶⁹ Photograph, Musée Guimet, 24155/15.

⁷⁰ Bernet Kempers, 12, Stutterheim, 59; founded 732; the date has been challenged by Vogler, 64.

⁷¹ Bernet Kempers, 12, pl. 237; With, 67, pls. 130–132; Juynboll, 31, pl. IV/2; Krom, 37, pl. XXVI; Zimmer, 68, pls. 502–503.

⁷² This also seems to have been suspected by Dr. J. E. van Lohuizen-de Leeuw; see letter to J. A. Pope, May 4, 1959.

IV. CHOLA PARVATI

Some of the greatest masterpieces of Indian art were created by south Indian bronze casters, especially during the first half of the Chola dynasty (ca. 850–1280); and one of the outstanding examples outside of India is the large image of Parvati in the Freer Gallery (*frontispiece* and *figs. 25–28*).

The Cholas extended their rule over nearly all of south and southeast India; they sent embassies to Burma, Cambodia and China; they conquered Ceylon and in a unique naval expedition (A.D. 1025) destroyed the powerful maritime kingdom of Srivijaya (Malay Peninsula, Sumatra, Java) which threatened their flourishing trade with China (see above p. 23).

The Chola princes also were great patrons of religion, art and literature. The whole of south India, especially the heartland of their kingdom around Tanjavur (Tanjore) on the holy Kaveri river, is studded with the beautiful temples they built. The Rajarajesvara Temple (completed A.D. 1010) at Tanjavur, with its towering vimana of nearly 200 feet, is an architectural masterpiece and one of the most beautiful temples of India (*fig. 24*).

Unlike Indian stone sculpture, the bronze images, made for processions, are independent and complete by themselves. In a south Indian temple, however, these icons are now almost invariably dressed (*fig. 32*). In procession, covered with jewels and flower garlands as well, they are virtually invisible. The long-limbed, heavy-breasted figure of the Freer image is a striking embodiment of the south Indian ideal of beauty, which was first realized in art at Amaravati (*fig. 10*) and transmitted to the Cholas by the preceding Pallavas (*fig. 20*).

The position of her arms—the right hand must have held a lotus—as well as the sacred thread and the type of crown suggest that she probably represents Parvati, the consort of Siva.⁷³

While Durga (The Inaccessible) is one of the personifications of the fierce and awe-inspiring aspect of the Goddess, Parvati (Daughter of the Moun-

⁷³ P. R. Srinivasan, 57, mentions as other possibilities Bhu-Devi, consort of Vishnu, and Devasena, consort of Subrahmanya. He rejects previous interpretations as Lakshmi (his own, *apud* Nilakanta Sastri, 44) and as a deified queen (Coomaraswamy, 21).

tain) is the chief representative of her benevolent aspect (see above p. 24). Her name refers to her father, Himavat, personification of the Himalaya mountains.

Disguised as one or the other divine consort, the ancient fertility goddess became socially acceptable to the upper classes. Her cult emerged, in the Middle Ages, from obscurity to a position of real importance. As early as the Gupta period, the wives of the gods who had been shadowy figures in earlier theology, began to be worshipped in special temples.⁷⁴

As the spouse of Siva, Parvati is his *sakti* or female energy. While the god was conceived as inactive and transcendent, his female element was thought of as active and immanent. Thus, the goddess embodied and represented the strength or potency of her male counterpart.

The grace and beauty of the icon hide the power of Siva; the noble carriage, the contemplative expression emanate from the spiritual realm which the goddess shares with her lord. An interior life current swells the delicate forms.

The broad sloping shoulders, full breasts and slender waist of the image recall the famous Pattini-devi from Ceylon in the British Museum;⁷⁵ a Ceylonese origin has therefore been proposed for this icon as well. There are, however, no salient features supporting this intriguing suggestion, and the drooping shoulders occur, albeit in a less pronounced way, in other south Indian images.⁷⁶ The facial type recalls the famous Nataraja from Tiruvarangulam (Pudukkottai) in the National Museum⁷⁷ as well as some of the lovely nymphs on the Nagesvara temple at Kumbakonam (*fig. 29*). The former has been assigned to the ninth–tenth century; the latter has inscriptions going back to 886. The goddess is clad in a lower garment which is so tightly pulled around the legs that it resembles a pair of narrow trousers. This again recalls some of the Nagesvara figures, as well as the bronze Parvati at Konerirajapuram.⁷⁸ The softly rippling waves of the folds also occur on the Pallava-*nesvaram Bhogesvari* and *Parvati* icons⁷⁹ as well as on the *Parvati* in the

⁷⁴ A.L. Basham, 10, p. 311.

⁷⁵ Zimmer, 68, pl. 462 b.

⁷⁶ Barrett, 7, pls. 35, 40 b, 54 a.

⁷⁷ Sivaramamurti, 56, pl. 16.

⁷⁸ Barrett, 7, pl. 4.

⁷⁹ Barrett, 7, pls. 33, 35.

Metropolitan Museum of Art (*figs. 30 and 31*).⁸⁰ The unusually short end of the sari which falls inside her right thigh is concealed, in front, by belt pendants of equal length; these occur in a similar form on the Parvati at Konerirajapuram and the Bhogesvari at Pallavanesvaram. The simple necklace resembles that of the Perunttottam Parvati.⁸¹ The second, lower pair of double armlets without projection can be seen on the Nagesvara figures.

A number of quite unusual features remain. In Early Chola images, the end of the sari or dhoti is pulled up between the buttocks and under the belt and generally sticks out above the latter as a three-dimensional flap or splay. In back of the jewelled coiffure, a large hair-ornament (*siraschakra*) is invariably placed. The Freer Gallery Parvati does not have the splay; nor is there a trace where the hair-ornament would have been attached. Despite all the parallels noted above, the image has a character and a beauty very much of its own. It combines a "lingering Pallava grace"⁸² with a stark and savage simplicity. We have to assign it to a local school or tradition outside the mainstream of Chola art—possibly that of Ceylon—which we cannot as yet identify. Perhaps the rather high percentage of lead, which is probably responsible for the dark colour, will provide a clue when one day we have more analyses of south Indian bronzes.

The bronzes mentioned above are dated to the ninth–tenth century (C. Sivaramamurti) or to about 970 (D. Barrett). The Freer Parvati has been assigned to the tenth century by C. Sivaramamurti and to its first quarter by P. R. Srinivasan. We do not believe that it is later than the tenth century, i. e. the Early Chola period.

It is interesting to note that both this extraordinary image as well as the superb Parvati in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, formerly in the Cora Timken Burnett Collection (*figs. 30 and 31*), were originally acquired by Hagop Kevorkian.

⁸⁰ Sivaramamurti, 56, pls. 58 a–b.

⁸¹ Barrett, 7, pl. 29.

⁸² Sivaramamurti, 56.

V. PALA VISHNU

The fine image of Vishnu standing in a shrine (*figs. 34-36*) is a superb example of the bronze casters' art in the northeast of India, Bihar and Bengal, under the Pala dynasty (ca. 760-1142).

The Pala rulers, great patrons of Buddhism (cf. *figs. 13 and 33*), had intimate relations with the Sailendras of Java and Sumatra mentioned above (p. 23). Pala influence is evident in Indo-Javanese sculpture as well as in the art of Nepal, Burma and Thailand. The Palas successfully held off the Muslim invaders from this northeast corner of the land; they were succeeded in this task, on a somewhat reduced territory, by the Sena dynasty during the second half of the 12th century.

The god wears a slightly conical crown; the lower, nearly cylindrical part is not elongated. The dhoti is very short; the garland falls to a point just above the knees. In his upper (back) right hand, he carries the wheel or discus (chakra), in his upper left, the mace (gada); in the lower (front) right, a lotus (padma). The lower (front) left which must have held the conch (san-kha) is lost. Vishnu is flanked by Sri-Lakshmi, goddess of good fortune, holding a lotus, on his proper right and by Sarasvati, goddess of learning and music, playing the vina (lute) on his left (*fig. 35*). Both consorts are half as tall as the god, relative to their lesser importance; they are shown in a graceful "triple-bend" (tribhanga) pose while their lord stands very straight and erect, as befits this icon. All three figures are placed on double-lotus pedestals.

The group is enclosed in an open shrine. A flaming trefoil arch above the center niche is decorated with a lion-mask (kirtti-mukha or "face of glory"). Two heavenly musicians (kinnaras) are seated at the angles of the cornice, playing the vina (*fig. 36*). The shrine is roofed by a gopura-like tower crowned by an amalaka.

The base of the icon is surrounded by a low rim interrupted by a spout (pranala) to the god's proper right. The stepped pedestal is well articulated and decorated with two bands of lotus petals; it has no feet.

The last feature is rather unusual.⁸³ The spout, an early feature, is very rare; we know of no other Pala example. The trellised openwork occurs on a crowned Buddha from Kurkihar⁸⁴ (10th–11th century). The architectural gopura instead of the usual mandorla (prabhavali) is highly unusual as well. Jain bronzes can be found having a somewhat comparable open shrine with four pillars, roof and finial.⁸⁵ We do encounter the gopura on a Pala lintel relief from Jessore, above a flattened trefoil niche with a seated figure.⁸⁶ A small votive stupa at Bodhgaya has a trefoil shrine face with a very similar architectural top above a bodhisattva with his sakti.⁸⁷ A small sikhara rises above the large stone relief of Vishnu in a torana (arch) in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (*fig. 40*).

The researches of Stella Kramrisch and R. D. Banerji on Pala-Sena sculpture have shown that in the 11th century, the eyebrows are doubled, the upper lid is accentuated by an S-curve; the goddesses wear flat, high chignons which come to resemble Phrygian caps; the god's crown becomes more elongated and cone-shaped.⁸⁸ We also note that the dhoti is somewhat longer and the garland falls below the knee.⁸⁹ The gentle facial expression and the sensitive modelling of the body remind us that Indian naturalism aims at showing phases of spiritual attainment; they also confirm a 10th-century date for the lovely Freer Gallery icon. The bronze is said to have come from Nalanda (Bihar), site of a famous monastery and university. In view of the parallels quoted above, a provenance from Bihar seems highly probable.

We reproduce an interesting Pala bronze icon of Natesa, Siva the Divine Dancer (*fig. 37*), which is in worship in the temple of Melakkadambur (South Arcot district) in south India. The ten-armed god is dancing on Nandi, his bull

⁸³ Compare, however, the Vishnu (10th–11th century) in the George P. Bickford Collection, 41, *fig. 7*; the Manasa (9th–10th century) in the Heeramanek Collection, 48, *fig. 66*; the Nalanda Buddha (9th century) in the Buddha Jayanti Exhibition in Calcutta, Catalogue, *fig. 56*.

⁸⁴ *Patna Museum Catalogue*, 45, pl. XXX; 10th–11th century.

⁸⁵ Seated Parsvanatha and standing Mahavira from Aluara, 12th century; 45, pl. XXXVI.

⁸⁶ Banerji, 5, pl. XCIIb.

⁸⁷ Banerji, 5, pl. LXXXVIIb and p. 154.

⁸⁸ Kramrisch, 35, pl. 123.

⁸⁹ Banerjea, 4, pl. XXII/3; Indian Museum, Calcutta, 40, pl. VIc; Heeramanek Collection, 48, *fig. 65* (both from Rangpur, Bengal); 41, *fig. 7* (Bickford Collection).

vehicle, a typically northern configuration popular in Pala art of the tenth century. Perhaps this bronze was brought back by Rajendra Chola I from his expedition to the Ganges (ca. 1025).

Iconographically the Freer image can be roughly classified as four-armed (chaturbhujā) and standing (sthanakamurti). Among the twenty-four forms (murtis) of Vishnu,⁹⁰ the one which carries the four attributes (the lotus signifying creation; the discus, protection; the conch, salvation; and the mace, destruction) in the same order as the Freer icon, is identified as Sridhara⁹¹ or as Hrishikesa.⁹² Banerjea quotes a tantric text⁹³ for the statement that this latter disposition identifies the Supreme Lord Vasudeva. Yet another scripture⁹⁴ seems to allow the interpretation as Krishna. The variants probably imply that, under whichever form he appeared, it always was the Supreme Lord Vasudeva-Krishna who was worshipped.

Vishnu, together with Siva one of the two principal Hindu gods is, historically speaking, a composite figure like the others (see above pp. 1-3). In the Rigveda he was a minor solar deity who took three steps by which he traversed the whole of the universe (trivikrama)—a legend associated with the movement of the sun. In the late Vedic period of the Brahmanas Vishnu had become more important, being identified with the sacrifice. In the epic and Puranic age, he was regarded as the most influential member of the later Brahmanical triad (trimurti)—which was evolved in Gupta times. His rise to importance as a sectarian deity was due to his identification with Vasudeva-Krishna, the Satvata hero who was at the root of the bhakti-cult. Vasudeva was a kshatriya chief, like the Buddha and Mahavira, and like them associated with ancient religious reform. Like them, too, he was deified after his death and soon widely worshipped. The famous Besnagar column erected by

⁹⁰ The concept of the cosmic Vishnu included 24 emanations and 10 incarnations; cf. Rao and Banerjea, *loc. cit.*

⁹¹ Agni-Purana and Rupa-Mandana; cf. Rao, 47, I/1, pp. 229-231; Banerjea, 3. He was worshipped by the sudras.

⁹² Padma-Purana; cf. Rao, 47, I/1, pp. 236 ff.; Banerjea, 4, pp. 411-412; he was worshipped by cobblers, washermen, dancers and hunters.

⁹³ Hayasirsha Pancharatra; *apud* 3, p. 74. The Agni-Purana passage is based upon the latter text but exchanges the emblems of the two left hands; cf. Marie-Thérèse de Mallmann, *Les Enseignements Iconographiques de l'Agni-Purana*, Annales du Musée Guimet, LXVII (Paris, 1963), p. 16.

⁹⁴ Matsya-Purana; *apud* Banerjea, 3, p. 75.

the Greek Heliodorus shows that by the late second century B.C. his cult—associated with the sun-bird, the great eagle Garuda—received the support of the ruling class and even of the foreign invaders. This Bhagavata cult was merged with that of the Vedic Vishnu and of the cosmic god Narayana who exists in late Vedic verses and the Brahmanas. To this, perhaps somewhat later, was fused the cult of Krishna, itself a merger of at least three traditions: tragic hero, amorous cowherd and divine child. Of these aspects, the second may be of south Indian (Tamil) origin, the last perhaps of Christian inspiration.⁹⁵ The fusion of these (and some other) cults became the Vaishnava religion, prominent since the early Gupta period.

⁹⁵ Rao, 47; Banerjea, 4; Basham, 10, pp. 300 ff.

VI. SENA VISHNU

The stone relief of a standing Vishnu (*figs. 38 and 39*) carved from black schist also comes from the northeast of India, realm of the Pala and later of the Sena dynasty. The Senas, who sponsored a Hindu revival in this stronghold of Buddhism, held out until the end of the 12th century when the Muslim conquest put an end to all religious and artistic activities in the northeast as well.

In his back (upper) hands, the god holds the mace (right) and the discus (left); his lower right hand is in the gesture of offering a boon; the lower left holds the conch. If the flame-like mark on the right palm is a miniature lotus, and if it is meant to be an attribute, he would be identified as Trivikrama, emphasizing his Vedic constituent⁹⁶ (cf. p. 35). It seems more likely, however, that the lotus mark is not an attribute, and that this iconic configuration, most popular in north and east India, represents the Supreme Lord Vasudeva.⁹⁷

As in nearly all images of a standing, four-armed Vishnu from north and east India,⁹⁸ the god is flanked by his consorts Sri-Lakshmi (right) and Pushti-Sarasvati (left). The former holds a fly-whisk and a lotus; the latter plays the vina.

Two small male figures stand next to the two goddesses. The sprite flanking Sarasvati (*fig. 39*) carries a horizontal conch-shell on his head and therefore must be Sankha-purusha, the Spirit of the Conch. The other is not identified by any attribute; Lakshmi's fly-whisk rests on his head. Since the Spirit of the Mace is female (Gada-devi), he must be Padma-purusha, the Spirit of the Lotus. The representation of these spirits along with the consorts and the respective emblems is quite an unusual feature which we know only from

⁹⁶ This interpretation is offered by Banerjea, 3.

⁹⁷ Adimurti Vasudeva, i.e. Vasudeva in his divine and primordial form. We follow M. Th. de Mallmann, *loc. cit.*, p. 24, who quotes chapters 44 and 49 of the Agni-Purana.

⁹⁸ Banerjea, 3, p. 74; de Mallmann, *loc. cit.*, p. 24.

eastern and northern India.⁹⁹ The large lotus flowers behind the god's front hands grow from stalks sprouting next to his feet. Further up we see, on both sides, a makara(?) topped by a leogryph surmounted by an elephant; each elephant carries a kinnara or gandharva: on the god's right a female clanging cymbals or dancing, on the left a male playing the vina.¹⁰⁰ Above the mace and discus, flying vidyadharas carry swords and lotus-buds (?). At the top of the prabhavali, above the god, a "face of glory" (lion-mask) is flanked by another pair of flying spirits.

The articulated base is decorated with a spiralling flame motif. Between spirals are, at the god's right, a kneeling winged Garuda—Vishnu's vehicle—in an attitude of worship; at his left a human devotee, probably the donor.

We note the horse-shoe shaped halo;¹⁰¹ the turreted crown with an elongated cone carrying a large amalaka;¹⁰² the U-shaped necklace¹⁰³ under the sacred jewel; the wavy double ridges of the garment, the fluttering scarves and the undulating lotus stalks.¹⁰⁴ These are all relatively late features, as are the double brows, the sinuous lids, the stiff torso, the angular hips, the conical legs with dot-like knees and sharp shins. So indeed is the somewhat crowded composition.

The Vishnu relief probably comes from Bengal and can be assigned to the Sena dynasty (1119–99).

⁹⁹ We recognize the Sankha-purusha in the same place, next to Sarasvati (to our right), on a Vishnu from Kewar (Bhattachali, 13, pl. XXX b; Banerji, 5, pl. XVIII b); there seems to be the Chakra-purusha on the other side. More often, the Sankha-purusha—always with the horizontal conch on his head—appears next to Sri (to our left); this occurs in the Vishnu reliefs from Sialdi (Bhattachali, 13, pl. XXXI), Gosanivadi (Bhattachali, pl. XXVII) and Bogra (Banerji, 5, pl. XLIV b). In the latter three reliefs, the corresponding figure (to our right) is the Chakra-purusha. A Vishnu from Ganpur in the Indian Museum is described by Banerjea (p. 79) as being flanked by his consorts as well as Sankha and Padma-purusha—the same as in the Freer Gallery relief. Banerjea also describes a Vishnu from Sarishadaha in the Indian Museum as being accompanied by all four Ayudha-purushas, an unusual feature at this period; 3, p. 79; 4, pp. 403–404. Cf. also 4, pp. 537–539, and de Mallmann, *loc. cit.*

¹⁰⁰ Compare the Rangpur bronze Vishnu (Calcutta), described by Banerjea, 3, p. 81. For the animal symbolism, see J. Auboyer, *Le Trône et son symbolisme dans l'Inde*, Paris, 1949; de Mallmann, *loc. cit.*, p. 235.

¹⁰¹ Cf. Kramrisch, 35, figs. 36, 39; Bhattachali, 13, pls. XXVII, XLI a–b.

¹⁰² Cf. Bhattachali, 13, pl. XXVI b, XXXI; Banerji, 5, pls. XVIII d, XLIV.

¹⁰³ Bhattachali, 13, pl. XXXI, Banerji, 5, pl. XLIV.

¹⁰⁴ Bhattachali, 13, pl. XXXI, Banerji, 5, pl. XLIV, Kramrisch, 35, p. 125.

A somewhat earlier large relief of Vishnu with his consorts and numerous minor deities inside an arched niche (*fig. 40*) came to the Metropolitan Museum of Art from the collection of Cora Timken Burnett who acquired it from Hagop Kevorkian. The Freer Gallery relief came from Mr. Kevorkian as well.

VII. ORISSA IVORY THRONE LEG

The superb ivory carving (*figs. 41–47*) represents a rampant gajasimha or gajavirala (elephant-lion) about to kill a demon or warrior dangling from his trunk. The monster towers above a wooded mountain teeming with wild animals and hunters.¹⁰⁵

Its lion mane falls over the neck in four tiers of curly strands, the lowest encircling the throat (*figs. 43 and 44*). Curly flanges grow along withers and thighs as well, and on the back of the lower legs of the lion body; the tail curls back up to the head in an elegant curve. The elephant head is adorned with an elaborate headdress bordered by strings of pearls with pipal, or bell-shaped, pendants. A rich necklace shows the same pattern; the bracelets or anklets are studded with jewels. Despite the heraldic pose, the monster is full of life and vigour: the chest swells with power; one of the mighty paws is clawing the victim's right leg while another steps up on the rocks.

The pot-bellied warrior is dangling, in agony, from his left leg which is firmly gripped by the elephant trunk (*fig. 41*).¹⁰⁶ The left hand holds a round shield against the monster's claws (*fig. 44*); the right arm, now broken, probably carried a short sword or dagger.¹⁰⁷ His hair, tied by a ribbon, seems to fan out like a mane; the tips of the locks are curled in like those of the gajasimha. Perhaps, however, this really is a feather headdress.¹⁰⁸ He wears large, circular earrings, a necklace of beads which defies gravity, and a patterned dhoti. The bulging eyes show traces of red paint (*fig. 46*). The eyebrows are raised and the mouth distorted into a grimace showing teeth and protruding tongue. He is bearded and wears a pointed moustache. A square decoration is cut into his forehead; it is surrounded by a light crescent-shaped spot which

¹⁰⁵ The Freer Gallery ivory has been published in an extensive and thorough paper by Mrs. J. van Lohuizen-de Leeuw, 39, on which the present description is largely based. It is also discussed in the publication of the Philadelphia ivory by Stella Kramrisch, 36, and in a paper by Moti Chandra, 18, which we have used as well.

¹⁰⁶ A warrior caught in an elephant's trunk is a feature of the famous Charlemagne ivory in Paris, called by D. Barrett "Gujarat, 15th century" (*Oriental Art*, I, 1955), and by Chandra, 18, "Deccan, Rashtrakuta period."

¹⁰⁷ Compare the Philadelphia carving; Kramrisch, 36.

¹⁰⁸ Chandra, 18, pp. 53 ff.

may be the imprint of paint that has since disappeared. The forehead decoration probably is a caste or cult mark; it has been interpreted as a crescent moon, designating a follower of Siva.¹⁰⁹

When we walk around the stylized rocky mountain, starting at the monster's left foot (*fig. 45*), we first encounter a hermit¹¹⁰ sitting peacefully in his cave; his head rests on his hands, which are folded over the raised knee. A parrot-like bird is perched on a tree above. To the left, a wild buffalo is curled up in sleep, unaware of the hunter approaching him behind the corner. Higher up an elephant emerges; his head is turned round to the left, his trunk explores a stylized rock. Further up, a monkey, head down, swings from a tree.

Along the foot of the mountain, various animals appear among rocks and jungle undergrowth.¹¹¹ First, a creature emerges which looks like a bear (?). Then we discover a boar half hidden by a rock. Moving further (*fig. 46*) we see an elephant rushing out of a cave while below a crocodile crawls into a hole; only its tail is still visible. Next to it, a lion with curly mane and long bushy tail lies behind a tree. The hunter who seems to be aiming his arrow at the buffalo has already been mentioned. To the left of the lion, another hunter draws his bow (*fig. 47*). Both hunters wear a short dhoti, a sash around the chest, necklace, earrings and bracelets. Their hair fans out in strands curled round at the end, like that of the demon-warrior captured by the gajasimha. Since these two are undemonically occupied in hunting, it seems likely that their hair is not standing on end but that they are indeed wearing feather headdresses.¹¹²

Below the second hunter, we see a deer drinking and, to the left, a head with pointed ears and a peculiar snout, perhaps that of a rhinoceros or tapir; it also seems to be drinking. These details, as well as the presence of the crocodile mentioned above, suggest that the flat part at the foot of the rocky mountain represents a stream.

Above the hunter, a monkey is picking fruit from a tree. Another detail is half hidden between the dangling warrior's head and the gajasimha's raised hind leg (*fig. 44*): we see no more than the back and tail of a bird about to hop into its cave nest under a tree.

¹⁰⁹ Kramrisch, 36.

¹¹⁰ He wears no earrings or other jewelry.

¹¹¹ We follow van Lohuizen, 39.

¹¹² Chandra, *loc. cit.*

A nearly identical ivory carving in the Philadelphia Museum of Art¹¹³ displays a somewhat less lively and imaginative mountain landscape. In it we discover two boars along the stream, a mountain sheep peeping out of a cave, a bird hopping into its nest, a stag emerging from the rocks. There is a seated hermit, but there are no hunters.

The Freer ivory is nearly complete. The gajasimha has lost its ears; a part of the right front paw is an old restoration. The dangling demon-warrior has lost his right arm and part of his right leg. The lotus base originally had another row of pendant petals.

The top of the ivory is a flat square support with a rectangular mortise. The piece has been identified as the left rear leg of a throne or royal seat (*gaddi*).¹¹⁴ The Philadelphia ivory comes from the same throne where it occupied one of the front corners.¹¹⁴

Mythical animals combining two different species are ubiquitous in Indian art. The best known is the *vyala* (*virala*), or *sardula*, which has a lion body and a head with horns. In Orissa, a variant having an elephant head was particularly popular between the ninth and thirteenth century.¹¹⁵ A configuration of lion and elephant is typical of the throne for a divinity, particularly in eastern India. Generally, we see a rampant *sardula* above the elephant or lion.¹¹⁵ The lion is the symbol of royal authority, the elephant of royal power.

The dangling warrior is characterized in a manner typical of Orissan sculpture. The ridge between chest and abdomen generally occurs on nature-spirits and sprites (*yakshas*, *ganas*);¹¹⁵ the bulging eyes and flaming hair seem to suggest a demoniac nature.¹¹⁵ Nevertheless, it is quite possible that all three figures wear feather headdresses. Two at least are hunters. Their identification as *Sabaras*, i.e., aborigines, primitive jungle folk, seems to be the most convincing one.¹¹⁶ The *gajasimha* overpowering the *Sabara* possibly symbolizes the royal authority of the *Kesari* or *Ganga* rulers suppressing the ever-rebellious primitives.¹¹⁶

Examples of ivory throne brackets and legs are known from the 2nd century (Begram) to the 18th.¹¹⁷ The best examples of medieval ivory carving

¹¹³ Kramrisch, *loc. cit.*

¹¹⁴ van Lohuizen, *loc. cit.*

¹¹⁵ Kramrisch, *loc. cit.*

¹¹⁶ Chandra, 18.

¹¹⁷ Kramrisch, 36, Chandra, 18.

come from Orissa where old traditions persisted until at least the 17th century. In a set of three throne legs now in various Calcutta collections¹¹⁸ which probably comes from Orissa, the *gajavirala* has been replaced by a hunter on horseback killing a deer; the hunting scene has become more realistic. Arms and costume as well as the meander decoration of the base show Mughal influence while the rearing horses relate to the Vijayanagar tradition. These throne legs now are dated to the late 16th or early 17th century.¹¹⁹

An ivory throne leg in the Seattle Art Museum (figs. 48–51) definitely is a work of the Orissa school; it has been dated to the 16th–17th century. Once more, the central figure is a rampant elephant-lion (*gajavirala*). Its pose is strangely contorted: the head is completely turned, and faces backwards; the forepaws, in a futile gesture, clutch the sides of the chest; the tail curls forward between the hind legs. On top of the animals's neck, facing the direction opposite the elephant head, a weird mask is placed: a crowned, beak-nosed leonine head with bristling, swept-up moustaches sticks out the tongue. Attached to the head—which resembles a *kirtti-mukha* (face of glory)—are small human arms; the hands hold onto flying scarves (fig. 50). The elephant-lion is elaborately jewelled and caparisoned; his trunk holds a lotus. Mane and curly flanges are stylized into patterns resembling knitwork (on the chest) and tassels (in back of the hind legs). Compared to the Freer ivory, the leg is flabby, the foot is flat.

Down below there is, once more, a hunting scene. A pair of large birds are perched on a tree above two mounted hunters wearing turbans and *kaf-tans*, or long trousers, who attack a wild boar. Two more birds, one on each side, are visible behind the horses (fig. 49). On the other side, at the back of the elephant-lion, a dancer strikes a pose. She wears a large nose-ring and holds a tasseled scarf (fig. 51).

Hunting is one pleasure of the prince; music and dance the other.

The addition of the beak-nosed lion-mask is, aesthetically, due to the need to replace or balance the completely turned elephant head on the front side of the *gajavirala*; symbolically, it surely is an echo of the attacking lion on top

¹¹⁸ Asutosh Museum, Indian Museum and a private collection; Chandra, 18, pls. 14 a, 15 a; 5000 *Jahre Kunst aus Indien* (Essen, 1959), fig. 325. Another throne leg with a horse-man is in the Nelson Gallery in Kansas City; see *Archives of the Chinese Art Society of America*, XIX, 1965, p. 83, fig. 29.

¹¹⁹ Chandra, 18, refers to the "court of horses" at Sri Rangam (16th century); cf. Zimmer, 68, pl. 447.

of the elephant (cf. *fig. 40*), which is a motif of the throne decoration and also occurs in Orissa, at both sides of the temple entrance (e.g. at Konarak), as well as on an ivory throne leg.¹²⁰

The same configuration—elephant-lion with turned head and empty paws, monster-mask with arms, hunting scene (on foot) in front and dancer or musician in back—occurs on a complete set of ivory throne legs recently acquired by the National Museum in New Delhi.¹²¹ This set also has been assigned to the late 16th or early 17th century.

Mane and hairy flanges are strongly stylized but have completely lost the peculiar curliness of the other Orissa examples and look like fur pieces; the floral motif, still rather inconspicuous as the lotus plant in the trunk of the Seattle ivory, here is much more important and has spread over part of the body. We believe the Seattle throne leg to be somewhat earlier and to date from the 16th century.

The Freer and Philadelphia ivories have been related to sculptures on the Lingaraja at Bhuvanesvara (11th century) and, with more precision, on the sun temple at Konarak (1238–64).¹²² The foliated mountains and elaborate compositions appear in western Indian painting of the 14th century.¹²³ Hunters, wild animals and hermits are a popular combination in Mughal painting (ca. 1600). However, a middle 13th-century date for the two ivories seems reasonably safe. In fact, they are so close to Konarak that it is hardly possible to date them later.¹²³ We find a similar mane with striated locks, similar curly hair along thighs and legs, similar head and neck ornaments, and a similar dangling pot-bellied demon-warrior in the monumental sculpture of an elephant subduing a Sabara, which guards the Konarak temple compound (*fig. 52*). A *gajavirala* at Konarak¹²⁴ is perhaps even closer to the ivories; the lotus base is an additional common feature.

A late 15th-century inscription on the Jaganatha at Puri records a gift of eight ivory thrones and confirms the existence of an important school of ivory carving in Orissa.¹²⁵ An ivory Ganesa from Orissa, now in the Metro-

¹²⁰ Chandra, 18, pp. 59/60 and Dwivedi (note 121), p. 62.

¹²¹ V. P. Dwivedi, "Ivoires Indiens," *Arts Asiatiques*, t. XVI, 1967. For two other ivories, cf. *Oriental Art*, XIII/2 (1967).

¹²² Kramrisch, 36, van Lohuizen, 39, Chandra, 18.

¹²³ Chandra, 18.

¹²⁴ Zimmer, 68, pl. 365.

¹²⁵ van Lohuizen, 39.

politan Museum of Art (figs. 53–55), can be assigned to this very school. The strings of bells along head ornament, belt, and anklets, as well as the tiered tassels, all appear at Konarak.¹²⁶ The veined ears and other details also recall a Ganesa from Khiching (Orissa),¹²⁷ but the Metropolitan ivory has lost some of the vigor of the earlier piece. The striated mane, still arranged in neat tiers, is more formalized than on the Freer ivory but less than on the Seattle carving; the squat pedestal is lower and more simple than the Seattle, New Delhi and Calcutta ones. The modelling of the plump body is plastic and alive and does not yet show the mannered stylization of the Seattle throne leg. The flaring scarves appear at Konarak, as well as at Chidambaram, in the 13th century.¹²⁸ We can date the Ganesa to the latest phase of the Ganga dynasty which ended in 1432 or to the following Gajapati rulers, i.e., to the 14th or 15th century.

¹²⁶ Zimmer, 68, pls. 357, 363, 372, 375.

¹²⁷ Banerjea, 4, frontispiece; another dancing Ganesa from Khiching, *ibid.*, pl. XV/2.

¹²⁸ J. C. Harle, *Temple Gateways in South India* (Oxford, 1963), figs. 59, 169, 171 a.

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PLATES

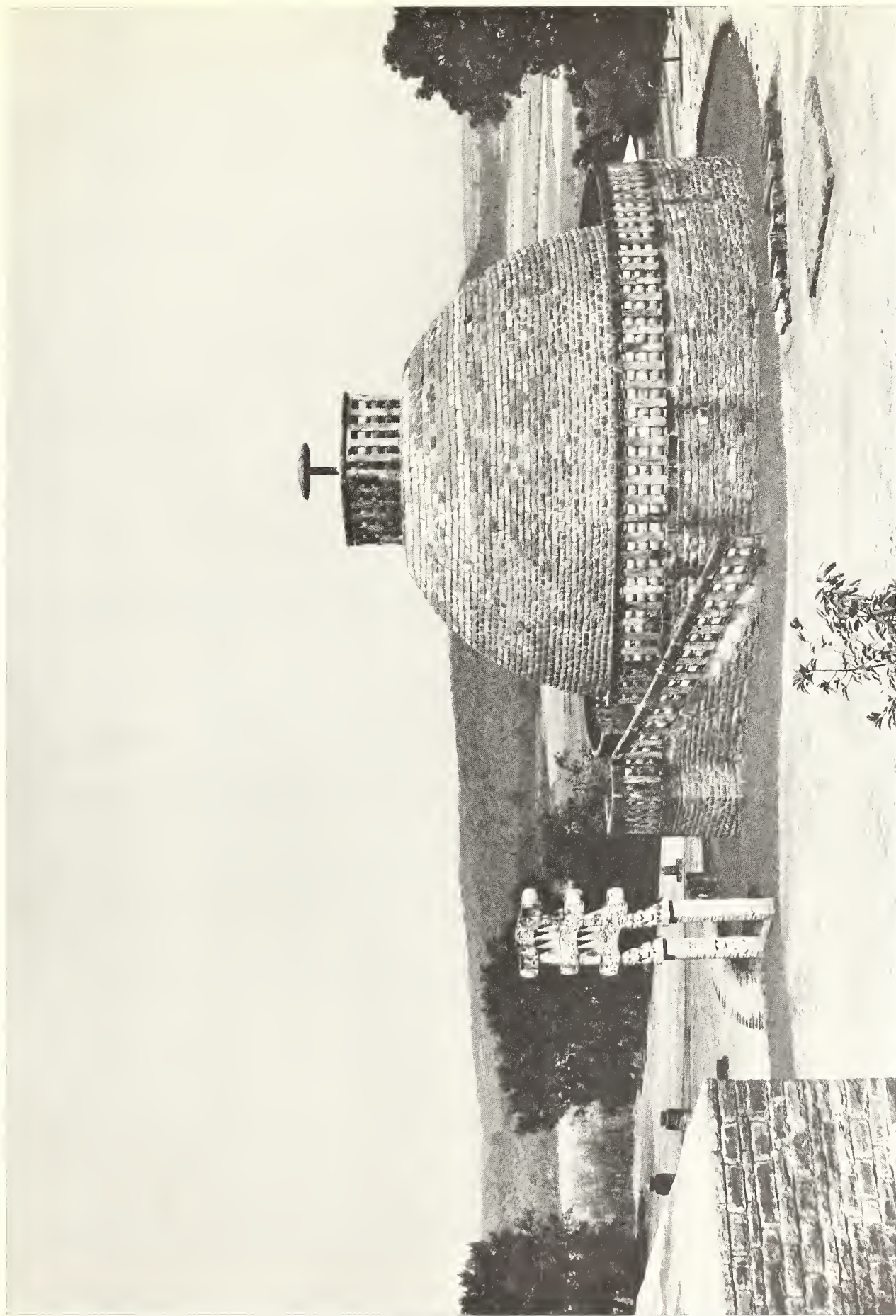


FIG. 1.—Stupa number III, Sanchi; Early Andhra dynasty, second century B. C. to first century A. D. (gateway).
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FIG. 2.—Stupa number I and eastern gateway, Sanchi; Early Andhra dynasty, second century B.C. to first century A.D. (gateway). Copyright, Aschwin Lippe.



FIG. 3.—Stupa railing from Barhut; Sunga dynasty, second century B. C.; Indian Museum, Calcutta. Height, 236 cm. (93 in.). Photo, courtesy of The Cleveland Museum of Art.



FIG. 4.—King Vidudabha Visits the Buddha; railing relief from the Barhut stupa; Sunga dynasty, second century B. C. Height, 48 cm. (18 $\frac{7}{8}$ in.). Freer Gallery of Art, 32.25.

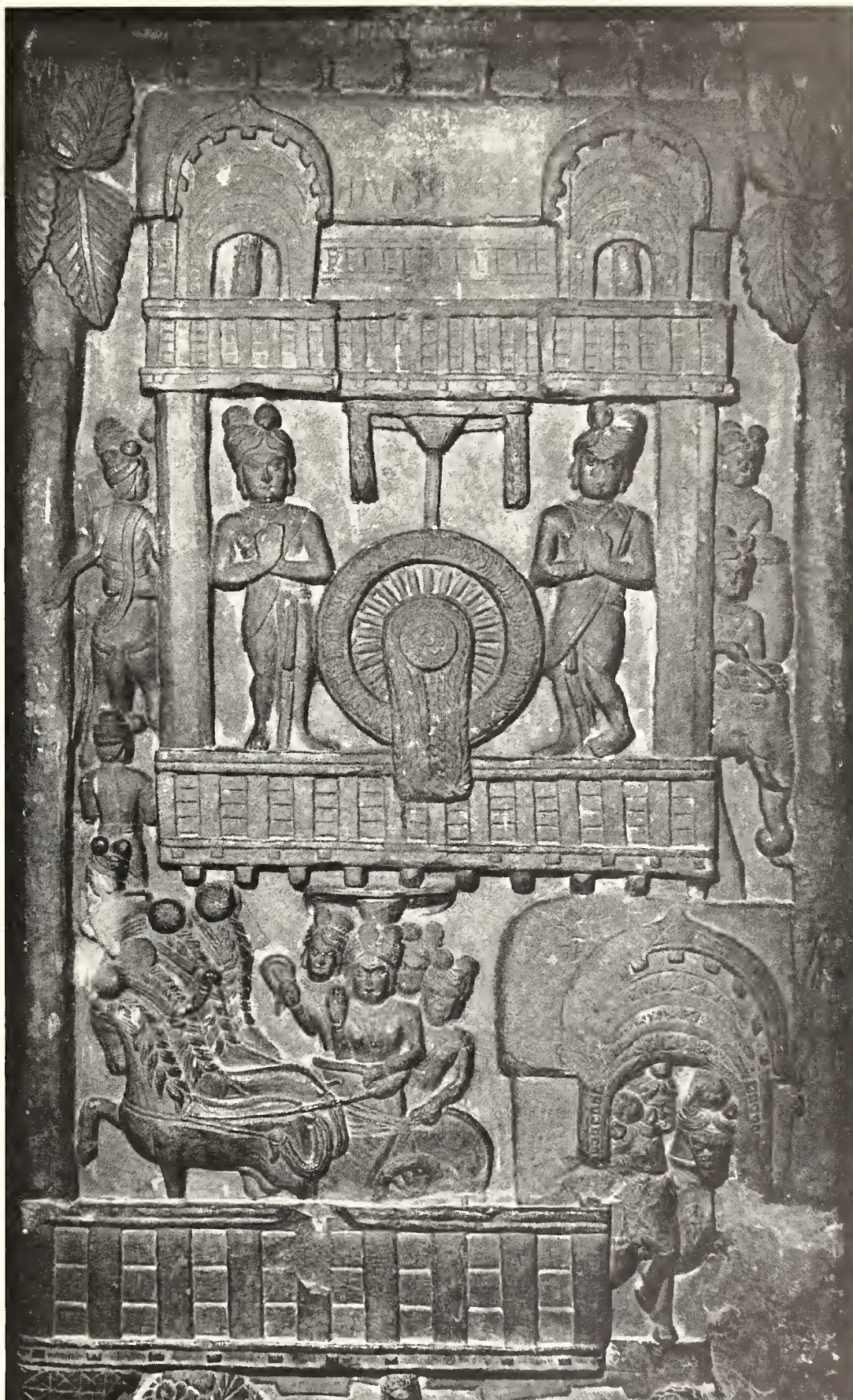


FIG. 5.—King Prasenajit Visits the Buddha; railing relief from the Barhut stupa; Sunga dynasty, second century B. C. Courtesy, Indian Museum, Calcutta.



FIG. 6.—Worship of a stupa (parinirvana); detail from stupa number I, northern gateway, Sanchi; Early Andhra dynasty, first century A. D. Courtesy of Eliot Elisofon, Life Magazine (c) Time, Inc.



FIG. 7.—Worship of a stupa (parinirvana); railing relief from the Barhut stupa;
Sunga dynasty, second century B. C. Height, 47.5 cm. (18³/₄ in.). Freer Gallery of Art, 32.26.



FIG. 8.—Birth of the Buddha, Gandhara (Pakistan); Kushan dynasty, late second or early third century A.D.
Height, 67 cm. (26³/₈ in.). Freer Gallery of Art, 49.9.



FIG. 9.—Birth of the Buddha, Gandhara (Pakistan); Kushan dynasty, late second or early third century A. D.
Height, 32.4 cm. ($12\frac{3}{4}$ in.). Courtesy, The Art Institute of Chicago, S. M. Nickerson Fund, 23.315.



FIG. 10.—Birth of the Buddha, Amaravati; Early Andhra dynasty, second century A.D. Height, about 76 cm. (30 in.).
Courtesy, British Museum.



FIG. 11.—Mara's Assault and the Buddha's Enlightenment, Gandhara (Pakistan); Kushan dynasty, late second or early third century A.D. Height, 67 cm. (26³/₈ in.). Freer Gallery of Art, 49.9.



FIG. 12.—Mara's Assault and the Buddha's Enlightenment, detail; Ajanta Cave XXVI; Vakataka dynasty, early sixth century. Copyright, Aschwin Lippe.



FIG. 13.—Mahabodhi Temple and Tree of Wisdom, Bodhgaya; about fifth-sixth century, restored fourteenth century. Copyright, Aschwin Lippe.



FIG. 14.—The Buddha's First Sermon, Gandhara (Pakistan); Kushan dynasty, late second or early third century A.D. Height, 67 cm. (26³/₈ in.). Freer Gallery of Art, 49.9.



FIG. 15.—The Buddha's First Sermon and Teaching Buddhas; Ellora Cave XII; Chalukya dynasty, seventh century.
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FIG. 16.—The Buddha's Death (parinirvana), Gandhara (Pakistan); Kushan dynasty, late second or early third century A.D. Height, 67 cm. (26³/₈ in.). Freer Gallery of Art, 49.9.



FIG. 17.—The Buddha's Death (parinirvana), detail; Ajanta Cave XXVI; Vakataka dynasty, early sixth century.
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FIG. 18.—Durga Slaying the Buffalo-Titan, Alampur; Chalukya dynasty, seventh century; Alampur Museum.
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FIG. 19.—Durga Slaying the Buffalo-Titan, Alampur; Chalukya dynasty, eighth century; Alampur Museum.
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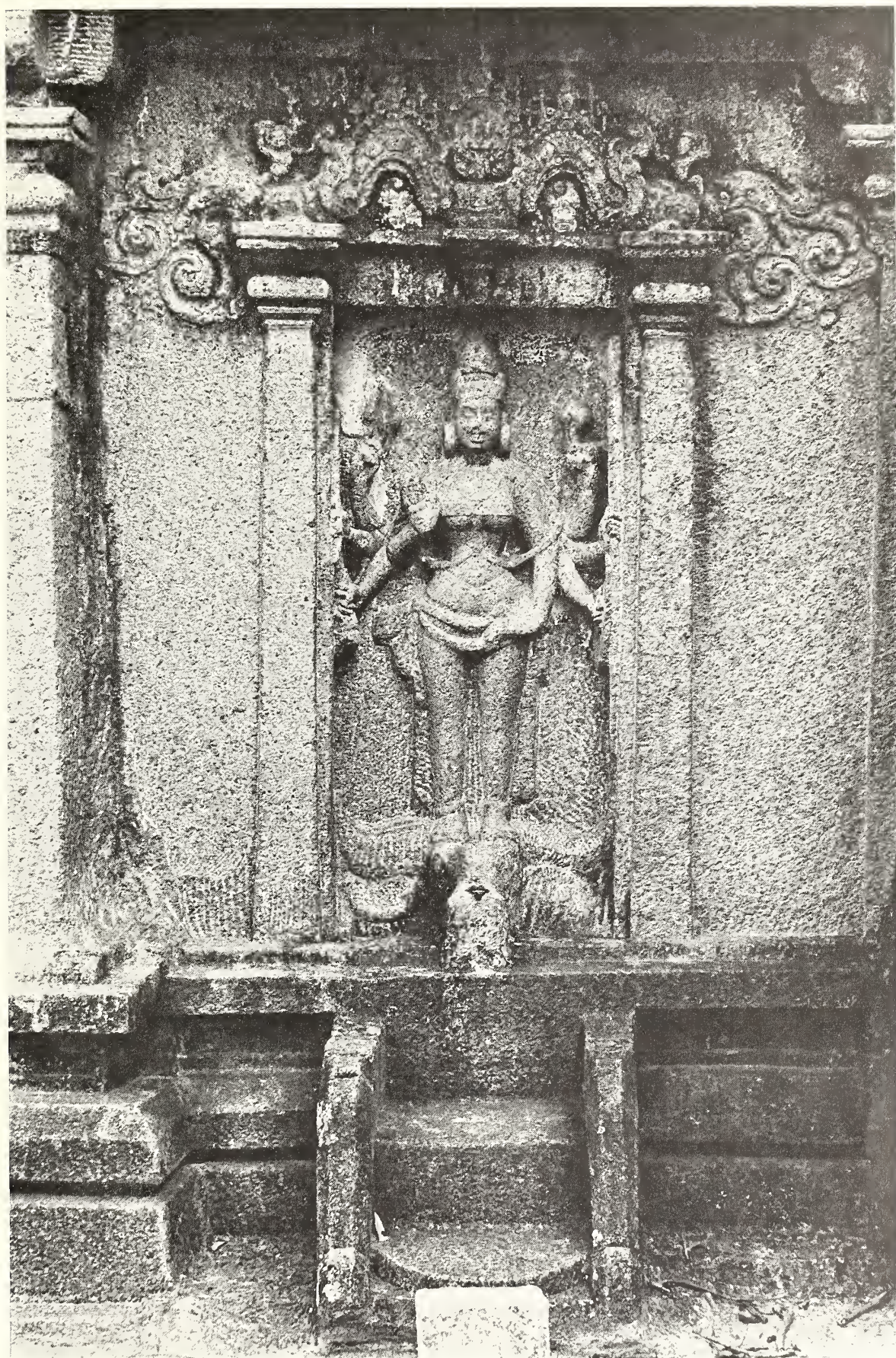


FIG. 20.—Durga Slaying the Buffalo-Titan, Trimurti Cave Temple, Mamallapuram;
Pallava dynasty, late seventh century. Copyright, Aschwin Lippe.



FIG. 21.—Durga Slaying the Buffalo-Titan, Java (Indonesia), ninth century.
Height, 54 cm. (21 $\frac{1}{4}$ in.). Freer Gallery of Art, 14.54.



FIG. 22.—Durga Slaying the Buffalo-Titan, Nusukan (Java), ninth century.
Photo, courtesy of the Photothèque, Musée Guimet.



FIG. 23.—Durga Slaying the Buffalo-Titan, Chandi Badut (Java), ninth century.
Photo, courtesy of the Photothèque, Musée Guimet.



FIG. 24.—Rajarajesvara (Bṛhadisvara) Temple, Tanjavur; Chola dynasty, A.D. 1010. Copyright, Aschwin Lippe.



FIG. 25.—Parvati (bronze), south India or Ceylon; Chola dynasty, tenth century.
Height, 101.6 cm. (40 in.). Freer Gallery of Art, 29.84.



FIG. 26.—Parvati (bronze), south India or Ceylon; Chola dynasty, tenth century.
Height, 101.6 cm. (40 in.). Freer Gallery of Art, 29.84.



FIG. 27.—Parvati (bronze), south India or Ceylon; Chola dynasty, tenth century.
Height, 101.6 cm. (40 in.). Freer Gallery of Art, 29.84.



FIG. 28.—Parvati (bronze), south India or Ceylon; Chola dynasty, tenth century.
Height, 101.6 cm. (40 in.). Freer Gallery of Art, 29.84.



FIG. 29.—Nymph (?), Nagesvara Temple, Kumbakonam; Chola dynasty, about A.D. 886.
Height, about 152 cm. (60 in.). Copyright, Aschwin Lippe.



FIG. 30.—Parvati (bronze), south India; Chola dynasty, late ninth-early tenth century. Height, 69.5 cm. ($27\frac{3}{8}$ in.). Courtesy, Metropolitan Museum of Art, bequest of Cora Timken Burnett, 1957 (57.51.3).



FIG. 31.—Parvati (bronze), south India; Chola dynasty, late ninth-early tenth century.
Height, 69.5 cm. ($27\frac{3}{8}$ in.). Courtesy, Metropolitan Museum of Art,
bequest of Cora Timken Burnett, 1957 (57.51.3).

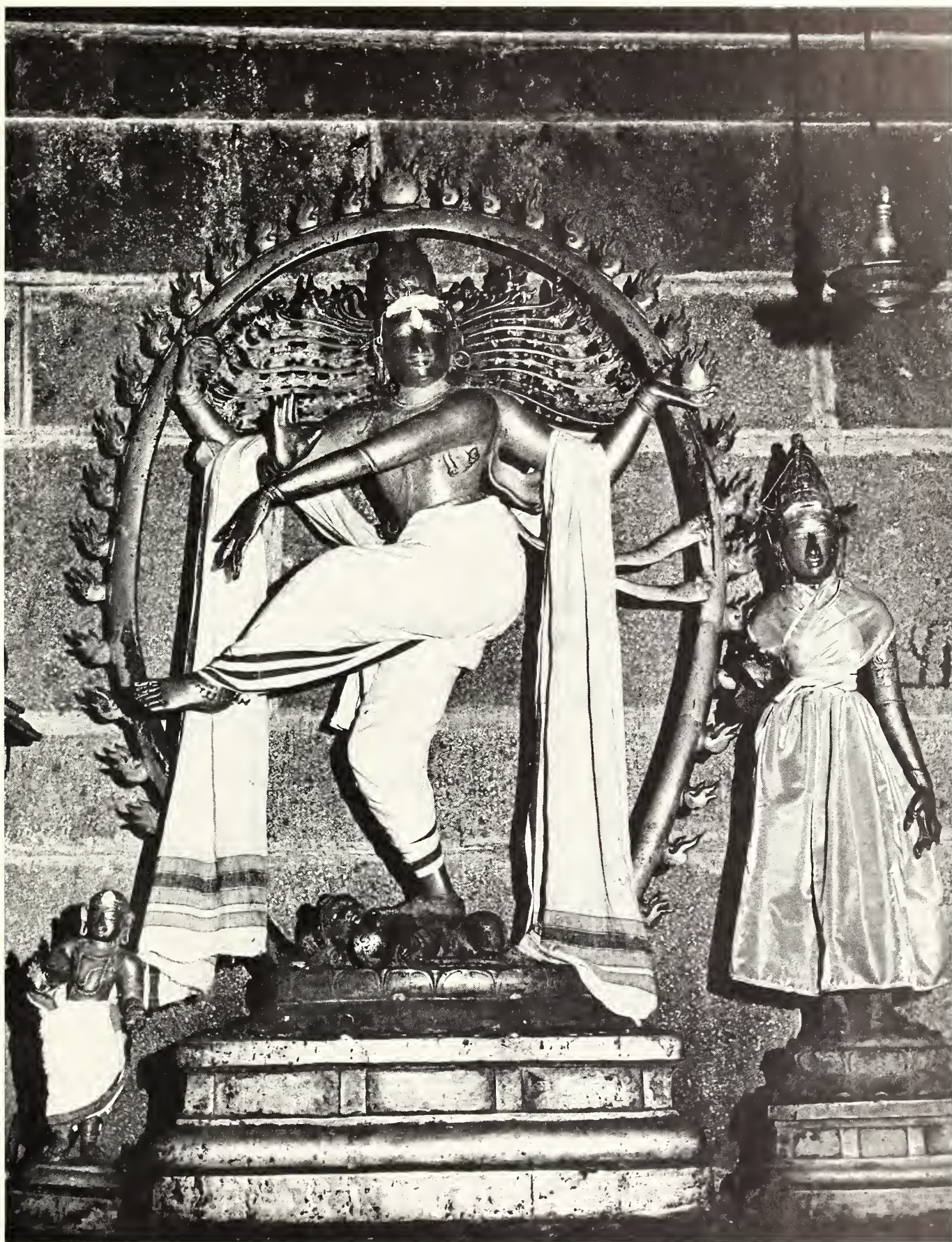


FIG. 32.—Nataraja (Siva as Lord of the Dance) and Consort (bronze); in worship in the Tyagarajasvami Temple, Tirukkaravasal, Tanjavur district; Chola dynasty, late tenth century. Height, about 114 cm. (45 in.).
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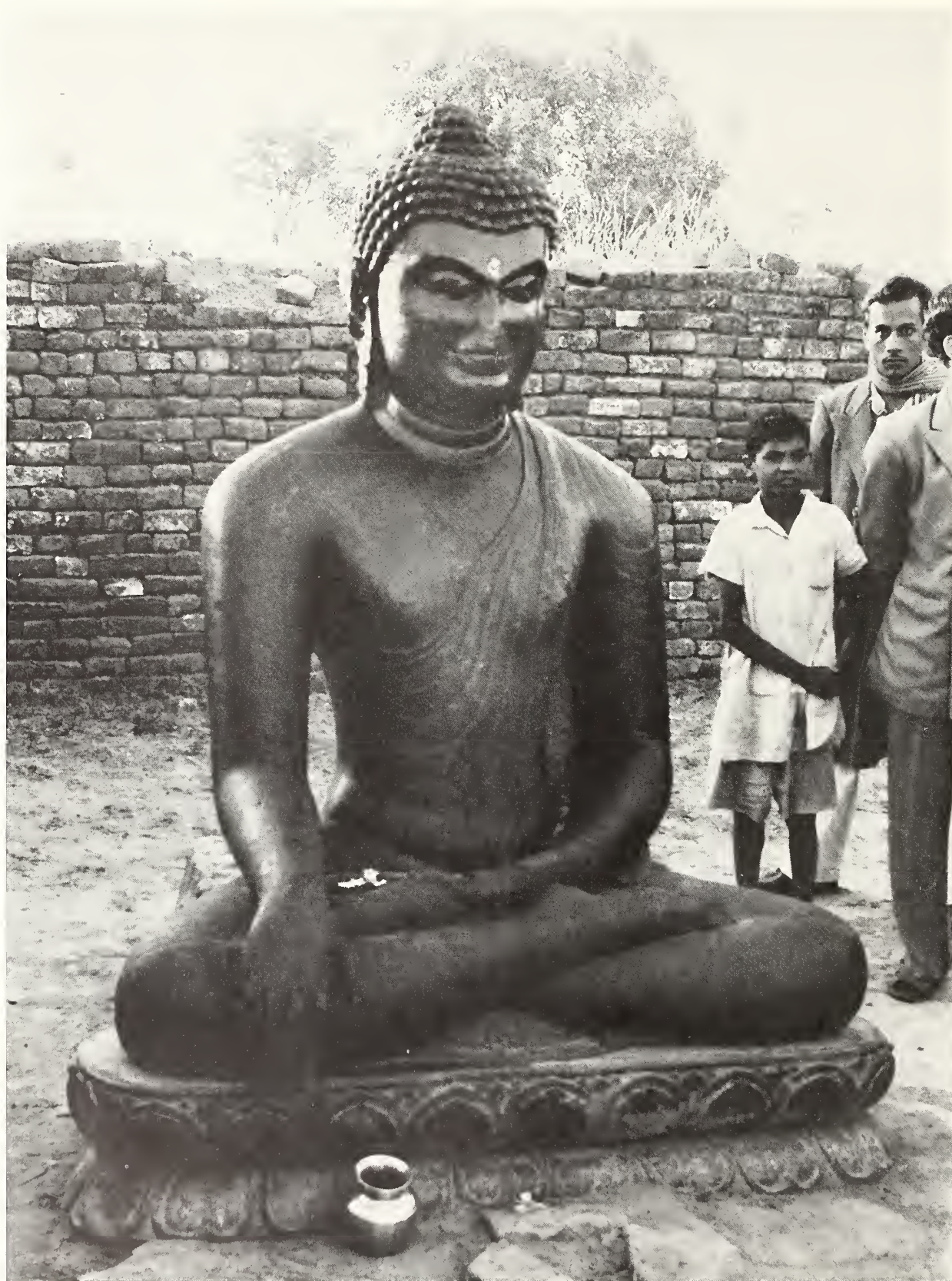


FIG. 33.—The Buddha Worshipped as Vishnu, Nalanda (Bihar); Pala dynasty, ninth century.
Copyright, Aschwin Lippe.



FIG. 34.—Vishnu with Consorts (bronze), Bihar; Pala dynasty, tenth century. Height, 43.9 cm. ($17\frac{1}{4}$ in.).
Freer Gallery of Art, 66.15.



FIG. 35.—Sarasvati, detail of *figure 34*.



FIG. 36.—Kinnara, detail of *figure 34*.



FIG. 37.—Natesa (Siva the Divine Dancer) (bronze); in worship in the Amrita-Ghatesvara Temple at Melakkadambur, South Arcot district; Pala dynasty, tenth century. Height, 40 cm. (15³/₄ in.).
Copyright, Aschwin Lippe.



FIG. 38.—Vishnu with Consorts, Bengal; Sena dynasty, 12th century.
Height, 85.5 cm. ($33\frac{5}{8}$ in.). Freer Gallery of Art, 27.7.



FIG. 39.—Sarasvati, detail of *figure 38*.



FIG. 40.—Vishnu with Consorts, Bihar or Bengal; Pala dynasty, 11th century. Height, 218.4 cm. (86 in.).
Courtesy, Metropolitan Museum of Art, bequest of Cora Timken Burnett, 1957 (57.51.7).



FIG. 41.—Throne leg (ivory), Orissa; Ganga dynasty, 13th century.
Height, 35 cm. (13³/₄ in.). Freer Gallery of Art, 07.8.



FIG. 42.—Throne leg (ivory), Orissa; Ganga dynasty, 13th century.
Height, 35 cm. ($13\frac{3}{4}$ in.). Freer Gallery of Art, 07.8.



FIG. 43.—Throne leg (ivory), Orissa; Ganga dynasty, 13th century.
Height, 35 cm. ($13\frac{3}{4}$ in.). Freer Gallery of Art, 07.8.



FIG. 44.—Throne leg (ivory), Orissa; Ganga dynasty, 13th century.
Height, 35 cm. ($13\frac{3}{4}$ in.). Freer Gallery of Art, 07.8.



FIG. 45.—Detail of *figure 43*.



FIG. 46.—Detail of *figure 41*.



FIG. 47.—Detail of *figure 44*.



FIG. 48.—Throne leg (ivory), Orissa; 16th century.
Height, 40.5 cm. (16 in.). Courtesy, Seattle Art Museum.



FIG. 49.—Throne leg (ivory), Orissa; 16th century.
Height, 40.5 cm. (16 in.). Courtesy, Seattle Art Museum.



FIG. 50.—Throne leg (ivory), Orissa; 16th century.
Height, 40.5 cm. (16 in.). Courtesy, Seattle Art Museum.



FIG. 51.—Throne leg (ivory), Orissa; 16th century.
Height, 40.5 cm. (16 in.). Courtesy, Seattle Art Museum.



FIG. 52.—Elephant Guarding the Sun Temple at Konarak, Orissa; Ganga dynasty, between 1238 and 1264.
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FIG. 53.—Ganesa (ivory), Orissa; 14th–15th century.
Height, 18.5 cm. (7¹/₄ in.). Courtesy, Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Klejman, 1964 (64.102).



FIG. 54.—Ganesa (ivory), Orissa; 14th–15th century.
Height, 18.5 cm. (7¹/₄ in.). Courtesy, Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Klejman, 1964 (64.102).



FIG. 55.—Ganesa (ivory), Orissa; 14th–15th century.
Height, 18.5 cm. (7¹/₄ in.). Courtesy, Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Klejman, 1964 (64.102).

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